THE

HONOUR OF CHIVALRY.

OR,

The Famous and Delectable

HISTORY OF *DON BELLIANIS* of *GREECE.*

CONTAINING

The Valiant Exploits of that Magnanimous and Heroick PRINCE; Son unto the Emperour *Don Bellaneo* of *Greece.*

Wherein are described, the Strange and Dangerous Adventures that befel him: with his Love toward the Princess *Florisbella*, Daughter to the Soldan of *Babylon.*

Translated out of Italian.

Sed tamen est tristissima janua nostræ,
Et labor est unus tempora prima pati.

LONDON,
Printed for *Tho. Passinger*, at the Three Bibles on *London-Bridge*, 1678.

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The *Tranſlator's* EPISTLE to the Gentle Reader.

EVen as a Young Child newly (as I may ſay) crept from his Cradle, endeavouring to pronounce with perfection his Natural Language for his future uſe, is firſt inſtructed to ſpell, before he be put to Reading, and to Read ere he Expound: So I, whoſe rough skill and harſh unfiled Wit, wanting the practice of continuing time, being disfurniſht of Natures help and Arts poliſht diſciplines, muſt ſeem to go, before I may preſume to fly, truſting to my own unfledged wings, leſt with raſh aſpiring Icarus, *I overwhelm my helps in the recordleſs Cave of everlaſting diſgrace. I ſpeak this (moſt Courteous and Gentle Readers) for that I had ſome few Moneths paſt, only for my private Recreation, in idle hours, imitated in this Hiſtory, the invention of a Forraign Wit, whoſe Conceit being commended of divers Gentlemen of no mean deſert, have by their importunate Intreaties, forced me (altogether unwilling) to make known the rude exerciſe of my vacant leiſure, which at length, to ſatisfie their Requeſts, not my Deſires, I did reſolve to do, only thereby to make you Sport, in the tedious paſſage of the Winter-Nights, if other Paſtimes do not diſturb it. For on this ſole hope it only leans, that being the firſt ſprigg of a Young Plant*

ſet

ſet in a barren ground, overgrown with Weeds, ſo it will obtain your general gentle Acceptance, with a Favourable Pardon for this Raſh Preſume. Defending it with the Shield of your Favours, which will be a ſufficient Tower, well armed againſt all ſcandalizing Tongues, that but make an ecchoing noiſe with their airy words, harm none ſave themſelves, by their reproachful taunts, even on their barking ſelves. But walled with hope, that the gentleneſs of your Vertues will nothing derogate from your names, by kindly accepting my good will, I end; praying that all preſent and enſuing Happineſs and Content, may every way anſwer your own wiſhes: Requeſting, That where you diſlike, there you would mildly Amend, and not utterly Condemn.

THE

THE HONOUR of CHIVALRY.

Set down in the most Famous History of the Invincible Prince *Don Bellianis*, Son to the Emperour *Don Bellaneo* of *Greece*, wherein are described his Adventures, and Love toward the Princess *Florisbella* Daughter to the Soldan of *Babylon*.

CHAP. I.

How the Emperor *Don Bellaneo* married the Princess *Clarinda* Daughter unto *Trolejano* King of *Spain*.

WHen the Grecian Monarchy flourished with most glory, tryumphing over the greatest part of Christendome, as is recorded in the large annual Registers of Fristone (Surnamed the Wise) preservers of the never dying and ever memorable acts of the Worthies of his time: There then solely swayed the awful imperious Crown & Scepter, an Emperor named Don Bellaneo, who through his rare vertues, gentle affability, gallant conditions, royal & Heroick deeds, his admirable regard, & most great care in the administration of equal justice to his subjects, not taking the ones right to make the other rich, was of them so highly admired and reverenced that the superfluity of words in revealing it, would impoverish rather than enrich the perpetuity of his never dying glory: this Emperor was altogether in his youth inclined & inflamed with desire of haughty attempts, the conquering of forrain nations Kingdoms and Signiories, wherein he never rested, continually betaking himself clad in habiliments of military arms, in field against his foes, manifesting his incredible valor, & his well knit sinews, which nothing disagreed from the greatness of his mind.

The

The familiar usance of his Nobles & Vassals was such, that they might be rather termed his companions and fellows, than subjects. He always would hazard his person in greatest and most difficult dangers offered him, accounting that honour to be supreamest, which was obtained with most toyl and peril, and judging it better that strangers should blaze abroad the greatnes of his military Fortune, and magnanimity of war, than the commending of his Souldiers deeds, insomuch that their chiefest acts in the perilous battels, was to guard their Lord: for so great was his couragious heart, not fearing mighty and puissant Giants, nor the strength of admired Knights, but as pretending all honour to himself and esteeming it but little, would as it were headlong run, where he found most dangers, that sometimes his whole Camp might hardly defend him from the fury of contrarious squadrons, where his Heroick thought could not harbor the least sign of pale trembling fear; in which kind of life he more joyed, than if he lived among all the delicious and delighted pleasures, that any Monarches could enjoy in greatest Plenty. Whereby his all-wondering Fame was so vulgard throughout the far remoted nations of the spacious Orb, which they accounted as a blazing Comet, presaging the future ruine, that his bare name caused in them such agues of timorous fear, as doth the furious Thunder (renting the darkned welkin, with mighty showers of Earth drowned waters) in the heartless multitude of rustick Country Swains, by which he became so odious to all his Enemies, that they would often give their own blood as a reward for his death, fore-judging his life will be their utter desolation. But having consumed the greatest part of his youth in hostile Arms, by counsel, and importunity of his Nobility and Subjects, being often urged thereto (though against his Will) he returned with wreaths of immortal Triumph, to the Famous and ever glorious City of Constantinople; from whence were dispatched in his behalf, to demande in Marriage the Princess Clarinda, Daughter to Toioian, King of Hesperia, to whom in Embassy were sent personages sufficient to make known his high magnificence, among whom went as chief the King of Hungaria, (Cousin to the Emperor) and the Prince Macedon, with many Dukes & Lords, with the haughtiest Pomp, and royallest shew of

Embassage

Embaſſage that ever went to any Potentate. This underſtood by the Iberian King, he in perſon came to mæt them, muſing at the ſudden comming of ſuch ſtates to ſæk him from ſo far Countreys: who being ſæn of them, with great courteſie that abounded in them, they alighting, did him that duty that might appertain to ſuch a King; who perceiving it, with the like ſolemnity entertained them: where over-paſſing their grætings, they mounted on Horſe-back, and by the way briefly diſcourſed of many things, untill they arrived at the famous City of Hiſpalis, where they were received again with many very ſumptuous ſhews, prepared only for that purpoſe, to expreſs the greatneſs of his ſtate: and approaching the Royal Pallace of Hiſpalis, they alighted, the King Toloian leading in one hand the King of Hungary, and Macedon in the other hand, entred the great Hall, where the Quæn and the Princeſs Clarinda with divers Pærs, expected their arrival, and moſt majeſtically received them anew, and the King of Hungaria knæled to the Quæn, deſiring to kiſs her hand; but ſhe refraining it, took him up in her armes, embracing and honouring him as worthily as the dignity of his eſtate merited, doing the like unto the Macedonian Prince and other Nobles that alſo proſtrated themſelves before the Princeſs, who entertained them with ſuch gallant grace, that they greatly admired at her rare beauty, and ſingular perfections, thinking themſelves happy, to have ſo abſolute a Lady for their Empreſs. No ſoner ended their ſalutations but the tables being laid, they ſate down, and were uſed according to their magnificence: afterward they had appointed them large and rich lodgings, by his Majeſties command, retaining in the pallace (the more to honour them) the two Kings. The next morning were ſummoned the chief Lords to Parliament; and their preſent audience to the Kingly Embaſſadours, who being thither ſent for to their Senate houſe, delivered from their Lord and Emperour their Embaſſey: for which the Spaniſh King reſted highly contented, and replied he was fully determined to accord with the Emperours requeſt, therewith remaining highly ſatisfied, and ſo they might prepare themſelves, for in ten days ſhe and they ſhould be provided of all neceſſaries: whereat they greatly rejoyced, ſo did the Quæn and Princeſs with that marriage, having before heard of

the Emperors rare and absolute conditions. At length all things ordered, they departed leaving the Court in great solitude, through the Princesses absence, who with her train continued their dayly Journeys, till they came to Constantinople, where they were welcomed, and the nuptials solemnized with most magnificent triumphs, torneys, and all manner of pastimes according, to the greatnes of such estates.

CHAP. II.

The Birth of Don *Belianis* of *Greece*, and of a strange Adventure did befal him on hunting, by which he parted from the Emperour his Father.

NOw the History doth record, that in process of time the Emperour Don Bellaneo had of the Empress Clarinda three sons, the eldest called Don Bellianis of Greece, that inherited the Empire after his Fathers death; the second, Don Clarineo of Spain; the third, Don Lucidamore of Thessaly, who not only in valour and military Discipline, equalled their Father, but excelled all other of their time, in all gallant and worthy heroical exercises; insomuch that all men had them in high admiration, especially the Prince Don Bellianis, that was educated as his royal state merited, and the heir of such an Empire required, until he came to the age of eight years, in which no Donzel in the Court (though he doubled his years) could excel him (there being very many) chiefly the Prince of Macedons son, by Dame Don Brianel: another of the King of Hungary, called Don Arsilio the strong, through his excessive strength; for being Knighted, he would often betwéen his arms smother puissant Knights, so that next the Prince he was accounted chiefest. In which time they were instructed and taught those things as fitted such Princes, wherein they so well profited, but especially the Prince Don Bellianis, who much applied himself to musick, that in those days none surpassed him: that the Emperour séeing him so much given unto it, was not slack in providing for him the excellentest Tutors that might be found: to whom, and those he had, the Prince highly rewarded. In which worthy exercise he busied himself till he perfected the age of twelve years, with such forwardnes, that every one admired him, assuredly imagining that in the compass of the whole earth was not a more excellent and rare spirit.

At

At this time he was taught the ſcience of arms, in which he ſhewed himſelf ſo expert(as it were a thing whereby he ſhould the inheritance poſſeſs)that he ſæmed to nëd no teacher. In this exerciſe he ſpent two years. About which time the Emperor being deſirous to hunt in a ſpacious Foreſt, three miles diſtant from the City, and being provided of all neceſſaries, he departed to it with the Empreſs, and his ſon Don Bellianis, leaving his two brethren in Court, that they deſired not to go with them, but there accompanied them Don Brianel, and the Prince Arſileo, with many Knights and Lords of high eſtëm, with ſo great and royal train, as they were going to pitch battle. The Prince Don Bellianis, did lead by the reins the Empreſs his mothers Palfrey, and the Emperor went conſorted with the Prince Ariſileo, and Don Brianel, of whom he reſted greatly ſatisfied.

In this equipage, within a while they arriv'd at the place where ſtraight their ſport began, that with the noiſe of hounds & horns, they drowned the Eccho of their own voices. A while after, from that ſide the Empreſs ſat, there iſſued forth a Lion and a Bear, with ſo ſwift a courſe, that though they would have hid themſelves they could not find any place. The Lion ran ſtraight againſt the Prince, who although it ſomewhat ſcared him, did not therefore fear him, but with an undaunted heart ſet himſelf before him, with his ſword in hand which at his ſide he wore, but the Lion joyned with him ſo ſuddenly, that he wounded him ſorely in the forehead, and griping him betwæn his arms, thruſt one of his paws into his fleſh, making a dëp wound: but the Prince not diſmayed thereat, nor loſing his couragious mind, gave ſuch a thruſt from his arms downwards, right to his heart, that the Lion through extreme pain left him. Then loking towards the Empreſs, ſaw that the Bear, with deviliſh fury, having overthrown the Prince his couſin, againſt which his great ſtrength nothing prevailed, dragged him over the Mountain tops: which he ſæing, although grievouſly wounded, and the Lion not ſtirring, ſtraight took his horſe, and with all ſpëd followed the way the Bear had taken, not reſpecting the many Knights that went in his reſcue, nor the Empreſs out-cries forbidding his enterprize, fearing he ſhould faint through the much blood he had loſt by his wounds: but counterpoiſing all theſe things with the great love he bare his Couſin,

ſtayed not, but in all haſt thruſt himſelf into thoſe great and thick Groves, through which he loſt great quantity of his blood; that it was no little grief unto him, being on foot; for the way was ſo thick and naught, that it was impoſſible for him to ride therein, for elſe the running of his Horſe would have put him in extream danger. But continuing his way through that fearful Grove, following the noiſe of a lamentable and pitiful cry which he heard, and being unable to paſs further through weary faintneſs, ſat him down, and ſeeing how much blood he had loſt by his wounds, and the danger which he knew his loving Couſin to be in, put him into a Melancholly ſorrow.

But long was he not ſo, by reaſon of a great noiſe that ſuddenly aroſe out of the thicket thereby, whereat he faintly began to riſe. And looking what might be the cauſe thereof, ſaw the moſt horrible and fearful Bear, haſting to the place where he was: but he letting himſelf before him to hinder his further hurting his Couſin, the Bear eſpying him, furiouſly ran to aſſault him, but by the Lyons experience he caſt himſelf aſide, and ſo let him paſs with the Deviliſh fury, and turning about to ſtrike him, perceived the Bear to runne into a Cave that was at the foot of a ſteep Mountain there adjoyning: whereat very joyful at ſuch a miſchance, went to his couſin, who amazed at what he had ſeen, was likewiſe coming to him, and with great love embracing him, and ſeeing his wounds bleed very faſt, ſaid, Without doubt good couſin, you are ſore wounded, wherefore I pray you, reſt here, while I ſeek out our company, and ſee your wounds dreſſed: I am not at this preſent (replied Don Bellianis) in ſuch neceſſity, but may accompany you, yet would I gladly know what ſtrange adventure is in yon hollow Cave. For as God ſhall help me, we hither are not come without ſome ſpecial ſecret. It behoves you not now (ſaid Arſileo) for your wounds will not ſuffer you to know the end of this ſtrange Adventure. For in the lingring of your cure, you may endanger your ſelf greatly. Never more it be ſaid (replied Don Bellianis) that I hence part, and not know it. Whereupupon hand in hand, they went till they came to the Cave, whoſe obſcure darkneſs was able to daunt the ſtouteſt heart. But thoſe haughty Princes arrived there fearleſs of any thing, & had ſcarce entred the ſame ten paces, but Don Arſileo unable to paſs further,

was

was (maugre his ſtrength) thruſt forth: and though he aſſayed to re-enter, yet could he not, but was with greater force ſtill rebated back, which extremly grieved him, ſeeing he could not enter, to help his couſin. Mean while, he heard within a rumour of great blows as if many Knights were in fight together. For after the Prince parted from his couſin, he went forwards through the cave, beating his head againſt the walls, on every ſide, till he had paſſed that great darkneſs that he found himſelf in a Hall, where he ſaw a huge piller, with certain Arabian letters, which he going to read by a light that proceeded from a window thereby, was forbidden it by a moſt deformed Gyant, that ſeeing himſelf before (having in his hand bound with a mighty chain, the monſtrous Bear, cauſer of his coming thither) with a terrible ecchoing ſound of his hoarce voice, thus ſpake.

Thou art not permitted (poor captive donzel) to read the Letters of the brazen Piller, for I will hinder thee thereof. being here placed for the ſame purpoſe, until the Prophecy be fulfilled which it containeth. The Prince reſted greatly amazed to ſee ſo miſhapen a Monſter, that he ſuppoſed him ſome infernal ſhadow, ſoner than a mortal ſubſtance. But he with a never daunted mind, made this reply, I may not enter battel with thee (thou fearful beaſt) having not yet received the order of Knighthood, which if I had, although thou ſhouldſt never ſo much gainſay it, yet I would not go hence untill ſuch time as I had read them.

No reaſon ſhall ſerve thee (replied the Gyant) to keep thee from death by my hands, for here was I ſet for that purpoſe to welcome him with it, that ſhould preſume to enter this my forbidden habitation. And ſo ending his ſpeech, he let looſe the furious Bear, which with his deviliſh pains ran againſt the Prince, and the Gyant laying hand to a great ſmiter hanging at his ſide, did the like, and being nigh him, reached him a mighty blow on the head: but he that feared more the Gyants ſmiter, than the Bears ſtrength, though big and ugly, got betwæn the Gyants arms, that he could not hurt him, making the blow vain, and the ſmiter with the ſwift courſe it carried, lighted on the ground and flew out of his hand. Mean while the Prince ſtrok the Gyant upon the thigh, which no more hurt him than had it faln on an Adamant: which he perceiving turned to the Bear, yet could no more wound him

than the Gyant, which vexed him to the heart: and seeing the Giant returned upon him, got behind the Pillar, whereon the letters were, using it as a shield. But the Gyant at this time so suddenly came upon him, that he could scarce effect it, who raising his steeled miter with both hands, gave him such a mighty blow on the head, that he thought it parted in two, yet it did him no harm, save that the strength thereof forced him backward two or three steps. At this time the Bear took hold of his arm with his paws, that renting his hunting jacket, wounded him sorely; but seeing himself in so imminent danger, was once again forced to take the Pillar for his defence, wherein he espied a Sword fixed, whose workmanship was such, that the like in no time was ever seen, wherein at that time he more rejoyced, than had he been invested universal Lord of the whole earth, or made a greater Monarch than his Father. And without delay stepping to it, very easily and lightly drew it forth, which he had no sooner done, but that there was heard a most horrible noise, as if the dissolution of the world was then, that unable to stand, was fain to get hold of the Pillar. Yet scarce was the earth-quake past, but that deformed Giant prepared himself to fight, which the Prince seeing, and joyful with the obtained sword, therewith thrust at his body with the utmost strength of his arm, that the sword appeared at his back; then straight the Giant fell to the ground, as doth some mighty Oak, rent with a whirlwind by the roots, and looking for the Bear, found him also dead, as things that had no longer term of life, than the lasting of the inchantment, which ended with the drawing of the sword from the Pillar. And that noise being heard of Don Arsileo, that remained at the Caves mouth, tried if he might again enter it, which without any trouble he did, and taking his hunting jaw in with him, he cast himself resolutely into it, and came to Don Bellianis at the time he ended his Giants life, and was giving thanks to God, that he had delivered him from so great peril and danger, and with wondrous gladness to see themselves together gain, ran to embrace each other, and Arsileo thus said, You have not been long (dear Cousin, though so sorely wounded as you were) in fighting this so strange and marvellous Adventure, to your admirable honor and blazing fame, whereby I do assuredly believe, you will terminate all other with the like expedition, so

that

that the perpetual record of your fathers glorious name (which he in many years with his great pain obtained) will be with the never-dying memory of your famous deeds, and the eternity of your acts in short time extinguished, and in oblivious darkness overwhelmed. No not so (good cousin, replied Don Bellianis) but let us read these letters fixed upon this Pillar, which cost me no less blood, than if they contained some matter of great importance, which they read to this effect:

A Prophecy, and is fulfilled in the 37 Chapter.

In the time to come when the fierceness of the courageous Lions by the greatness of my skill shall be put in greater fear by them that in valour had so great part, the fearful keepers of my Cave being slain, and the sword won wherewith the living shall be lost, and the dead put in possession of the re-obtained, with the greatest strangeness of obtainers, which until that time was ever heard of, shall be restored to their Royal blood, and the true possessors known.

Greatly were the two Princes amazed hereby, not understanding those words, though plainly they were meant by Don Bellianis, seeing he had ended the Adventure. Great is the need (said Don Arlileo) you seem to have of present care for your wounds which I see to be so deep, that I fear you may fall into some notable danger, through the great quantity of blood you have lost. Which was true, though the Prince with the joy of the good success, and in beholding his rich Sword, thought not on his great and dangerous wounds, which were such, that if any other of less, and weaker constitution, and courageousness of mind had them, could not so have sustained himself.

But while they were thus talking, from a most sumptuous Chamber there issued forth a beauteous Damsel, clothed in a Crimson-sattin Robe, so great, that the train thereof trailed on the ground.

This Lady was led betwen two Knights, antient and of great gravity, and on her attended twelve Damsels in the same livery, all shewed by their faces some heavy cause of melancholy sorrow, who being before the Prince, prostrated themselves on the ground, which he seeing did the like, and intreated them to rise: to which she said, I will not rise, most excellent Prince, until you

have

have first granted my demand. I do grant it (gracious Lady) said the Prince, and not only that, but many others, for my desire is only to serve such as your own self.

I do render many infinite thanks (replyed she) neither did I look for less from so high and honoured a Prince as you, guarded with such royal bounty, and magnificent excellency; and rising, took him by the hand, and entered the Chamber, which, though Don Bellianis had seen many very fair and rich in his Fathers Pallace, yet judged he that to be the royalist he might see: for the walls seemed of Christal, through which appeared such diversity of pictures, as the whole universe could scarce contain more: the floor seemed of transparent Emeralds, which so amazed their wondring senses, that they stood a while gazing on it, till Don Bellianis turning to the Lady that held him by the hand, said. Although (fair Lady) the entrance of this Cave seemed so timorous in sight, yet the variety of these rarities which it within contains, presents more shews to the outward sight, than the whole world besides, and without reason, was it not made with such extremes as to be inhabited with such excellent beauty within, and guarded with so great fear without, to forbid the entrance to all attempters. The Lady conceiving great pleasure at the Princes words, answered, I could not chuse but blush (most gracious Prince) at your words (though so honoured by them) knew not your great courtesie, that far surpasseth all others at this time, which causeth me to prize my self more than I should, or my merits deserve (though I should not under your protection do it) because all honoured praises and deserved merits rest in your self. But overpassing this, which is so well known to every one, let my entreaties so prevail with you, that my maidens may cure your wounds. I have no wound (replyed the Prince) that so much needeth cure, save my desire to know the end of this adventure, and also who she is so honoureth me. Very quickly shall you know it fair Lord (saith the Princess) but first must your wounds be cured, least you incur some danger, and after you shall know the cause of your coming hither, whom I am, and what else you will, all being done by her will that keeps me here. Thereupon the Prince was uncloathed by those Ladies, and one of them dressed him most skilfully, having great knowledge in that art, and being

being laid on a sumptuous bed, they left him to his rest. the Prince Arsileo remained in talk with the damsel of many things, especially of the adventure of that day, greatly admiring what Don Bellianis his cousin had atchieved, being so young of years. Do not so wonder, most noble Prince (said the Lady) for in comparison of that this Prince shall do, this is the least. Much marvelled Arsilio to be knowun in that place, not remembring that he ever saw any of those Ladies: and so they continued in pleasing chat till supper time, when the Tables being covered they sate down. And here leave we them to shew what befel the Emperor Don Bellaneo, and what he did.

CHAP. III.

How the Emperor departed to seek his Son.

AT the many outcries the Empress gave Don Bellianis her son to return from the Bears pursuit, divers of those Knights that were a hunting hasted after following the signs of the blood, till they came to the place where he did sit, & there found so much blood, that they rested wondrous dismaid, yet saw they not the caves mouth, by reason that the entry thereof was there stopt, made on the further side. But not staying there, they began to seek the Prince among the thick groves, with all speedy diligence, yet could not find either foting or sign of him, whereat they were so amazed seeing every where such quantity of blood, as they imagined he could not be far from thence, yet durst not without him return to the Empress. The like happened to the Emperor, whom a certain Knight told how a horrible Bear dragged the Prince Arsileo, as is before mentioned, who understanding it, made no long stay, but accompanied with many Knights, began to seek that way he heard they were gone, and after long toils, seeing himself in that thick wood, and doubting some mischance might befal him, called for his Armor, whereof he never went unprovided, as one delighting more in military succes than in hunting, & was with all speed armed, and mounting on his horse, put himself through the forest with one sole Squire, commanding the rest of his train to seek the Prince on the other side: nought prevailed with him their entreaty to go with him, but he commanded the Prince Don Brianel to take his Lance, cast his shield at his back, and leaving his company very sorrowful departed, fully determined

not to return to Conſtantinople, until he heard either of the Princes lives or deaths, for whom he ſo greatly grieved, that the more he thought to diſſemble it, the more his ſorrow increaſed. Thus in his journey leaving him, we will declare what his Knights did, which a little after met with all the reſt ſtanding by the Caves mouth, who knowing of the cruel chance that befel the Prince Don Bellianis, began greatly to lament him, but ſeeing it little prevailed, ſought him anew in many places, till the darkſome night overtook them, which forced them to return unto their tents, where they left the Empreſs, that inraged with grief would have commanded their heads to be ſtrucken off, that conſented to the Emperor to depart, not ſo much eſteeming the Princes loſs, as his ſudden going through thoſe dangerous woods, where certainly ſhe thought he would be devoured by ſavage Beaſts, inhabiting that Foreſt, wherefore ſtraight recommanded that with many lights and torches, they ſhould again be looked for over all the mountains; but not finding them, they worthily deſerved to be excuſed, and ſeeing neither of them could be found, greatly grieved, they all returned to the City with bitter execrations, curſing the hour they firſt determined to come to that place, cauſer of the Empreſſes inraged grief, that none durſt come unto her.

CHAP. IV.

The ſtrange and dangerous Adventure that befel the Emperor in the diſcovered Caſtle, ſeeking the Prince *Don Bellianis* his Son.

The Emperor putting himſelf through that wild grove, taking his way diverſly having no certainty of any thing, ſo travelled till it was night, and with great pain, ſeeing he could effect nothing to his intent, by reaſon of the nights obſcurity, alighted: ſo did Brianel, who unbridled their horſes that they might feed on the green graſs, which with overmuch labour were ſo tired, that they could hardly any longer bear their Maſters. But the Emperor being in great trouble and anguiſh of mind for the loſs of both the Princes, yet more ſorrowed for the Empreſſes grief, which was not little that he ſuppoſed that ſhe ſhould conceive, ſeeing neither of them return, than for ought elſe; for he certainly thought that if they were devoured by wild Beaſts, ſome ſign thereof would be found, ſo that perſwading himſelf the contrary

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he parted aside to rest, but he had not scarce slept two hours, when suddenly he awaked at the loud cries he heard, that all the vallies ecchoed with the noyse, which with more vehemence still seemed to increase, as if they proceeded from some in great necessity sustaining outrage: whereat the good Emperor was so amazed with trouble on all sides, chiefly at that time; yet as one searching such dangers, commanded Don Brianel to bridle his horse, while he laced on his helm, and casting his shield at his back, mounted on his horse, not setting foot in stirrup, and taking his lance thrust himself through the grove, following the voice he heard, imagining some of the Princes might be there: but feeling himself weary with much travel, yet supposing he approached every foot nigher to the lamentable cry, spied hard by him a high Castle, well fortified with towers, though by the darknes of the night he could not discern them. But coming to the gate, perceived the voice proceeded thence; and with great desire to know the cause, knocked at the same, yet none answered him; which more urged him to learn the force and violence within used, so that he went round about the Castle, but could find no entrance, whereat tired with delay, & the lamentable voice increasing, spied a rope, wherewith from the top of the Castle, they drew up stones, with a certain device they had within. So the Emperor finding no other entry, bad Don Brianel unarm him, who said, What mean you to do, my good Lord? will you by force have your entrance through these stony walls? I intend nothing elle (replied the Emperor) and therefore alight and unarm me, which done bind my Armor to this cord, that therewith, if I have time, I may arm my self aloft. I think it a meer madnes (said the Prince) to hazard your person in so imminent a danger: for besides that the coming forth seems so difficult, I believe you hardly will be suffered to see what kind of people doth inhabit it, and so have scarce time to use your Armor. I can do no otherwise (answered the Emperor) for it would be imputed to my everlasting shame, if I should suffer this wrong to pass unpunished, or not using that which my state binds me to. So dismounting, he was disarmed, and getting hold of the rope, taking with him his shield, he climed thereby to the Castle top, as easily as if he had gone up a pair of stairs, and calling for his Armor, Don Brianel began to tye it

to the Lord. But it otherwise fell out than he imagined. for through the Castle gallery, he saw above ten Knights, pursued by two most fearful Giants, and then other Knights, that laid on them great and mighty blows, which the Emperor seeing and wanting time to arm himself, imbraced his strong shield, and opposed himself against the Giants, calling unto the Knights that they should turn and not cowardly fly for fear. They being astonied with their shame, seeing a Knight without Armor have the courage to attempt such an enterprize, returned against the furious Giants, who with fretting yre, to see that one only man should resist their fury, set upon him with great Battle-axes in their strong hands. But he whose heart never feared their deeds, with an undaunted mind stayed for them, and making one lose his blow, receiv'd the other on his shield, which was such that parted in two it fell to the ground hardly saving his hand from following it, yet was it a little wounded. Whereat full of rage he struck one of them on the head, that the sword being of a good temper and governed with so puissant an arm, it cleft him down to the eyes, wherewith he fell with such violence, as when a tower is overturned by the fury of a sudden earth-quake; hereupon the other over-reached him with his Ax, that had he not warded it with his sword, it had been the last he should receive: for it descended with such vigour, that his sword was cut in two and he wounded piteously on the head; who then seeing himself in such danger, closed hold of one anothers arms, demeaning themselves so valiantly, that the Emperor with the surpassing strength he used, lost much blood by his wounds, which at length made him, being furiously moved, hoyst his enemy in the air, and threw him to the ground even in the place where he came up, and quickly pushing him with his hands tumbled him headlong over the tower, that with the fall he died: yet lest he might revive, looking out of a window he called to Don Brianel to kill him before he rose, who straight cut of his head. By this time the clearness of the morning began to shew it self, when the Emperor looking toward the flying Knights perceived them to be put to the worst, by reason of one whose valour excelled the rest, who seemed to be of high descent and their Commander, which the Emperor seeing, took one of the dead Giants

shields

shields, meaning to rescue them, whereat the Knight turning to him, to see where he had left the Giants, for being busy in fight with the Knights, little thought they should have such fortune, and seeing that horrible Giant dead, and how that Knight made against him, rested amazed, yet with great fury taking his sword with both hands, made toward the Emperor, which raising aloft, gave him such a blow on the shield, that it mad him bow to the ground, and doubling with another on the other side thereof, struck clean from his arm sorely wounding him on his Thigh, which the Emperor thought he had lost, that with mortal fury gave such another on the right arm, the greatest part thereof he cut, forcing the Knight to take his sword in his left hand, who with it would wound him; but the Emperor that had learned to omit no occasion, sustaining himself on his Thigh as well as he could, struck at him such a blow, which lighting on his well-tempered Helm, it feld him almost dead to the ground; yet greatly praising him for that he had seen him do (though he much had endangered him) would not any otherwise hurt him, but going to succor the Knights of the Castle, saw they had valiantly resisted their Adversaries,, and so seeing every thing accomplisht to his desire, kneeled and rendered God great thanks for his delivery from so great danger, being the greatest he ever had been in, finding himself unarmed. But going to rise, was not able to stand on his legs, though he greatly strived to do it, by the reason of his wound, which by that time was cold. And turning to them of the Castle, that already had slain their enemies, who extreamly grieving so to see him, would uncloath him to cure his wounds. But he would not till first they called his Page that remained without, which they did, wonderfully amazed at the haughty courage of the Knight, that so admirable and unheard of deeds had done, coming to such a place unarmed, which they judged to be the greatest act that ever was spoken of.

And calling Don Brianel, they told him what the Knight would have, who very joyful, because they told him he was in no danger of death, straight mounted up the Castle-stairs, where the Emperor was, greatly doubting his life, by reason he enterprised that adventure without armour, and went to the place where he had uncloathed him, and there dressed his wounds, which done, he

kneeled

knéeled down, demanding his Royal hands to kiſs them. The Emperor embraced him, and made him riſe; to whom Don Brianel ſaid, Great was the fear that I was in for you, my moſt excellent Lord, in that I was barred from bringing you your Armor, ſéeing you run into ſo certain peril, yet think I more eaſily you tumbled down the Giant, then you did your ſelf mount up unto the top, giving him no leiſure to uſe the rope for his eaſier deſcent. The Emperor much delighted in his pleaſant ſpéech, and commanded them to leave him alone to reſt his tired body, which the Knights did, taking Don Brianel with them, and deſired him they might know who his Maſter was, and his name, aſſuring themſelves the whole earths circuit could not afford his like for valour, and what chance had at ſuch time brought him thither.

To whom Don Brianel anſwered, He was called the unknown Knight, and though he had a long time accompanied him, he knew no other name he had, and that travelling over theſe mountains, he heard the great cries within the Caſtle, with what elſe happened. So leaving their diſcourſe, and thinking it time, went to ſerve the Emperor meat, whom they found more quiet (the pain of his wounds being mitigated) and after he had eaten, demanded the occaſion that thoſe Giants ſo uſed them. We know not good Sir (anſwered they) ſave how a Knight that came with them, knocked the laſt night at the Caſtle-gate, intreating us to let him in, requiring a lodging for that night, which we yielding to, opened the gate, miſtruſting nothing leſs, than that which befel: but in the opening, he ſet upon us with thoſe pitileſs Giants whom you ſlew; and when we ſaw ſo many inconveniences, ſent forth thoſe cries together with many women that were within. This (good Sir) is all that we know of this Adventure: ſo that if you had not come when you did, we had all ſuffered a moſt cruel death.

Tell me, ſaid the Emperor, what is become of the Knight cloathed in an azure Armor? he is priſoner in a Tower (replied they) until we know your farther reſolution what ſhall be done with him, worthily deſerving to be tormented with a cruel death for his treachery: But do not ſo (ſaid the Emperor) for he is a very good Knight, and deſerveth no ill uſage, & therefore have care he want nothing he ſhall need; for I would not for any thing he ſhould miſcarry: of him ſhall we know the cauſe of their traiterous deſign,

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which sure is not without special occasion. Hereupon the Knights went straight and dressed his wounds, who though he had lost much blood, seemed couragious as if he were at liberty. And after they had dressed him, he was conveyed to a fair chamber providing him with all necessaries as the Emperor had commanded. Who in this order continued ten days in the cure of his wounds; when remembring the task he had undertook, determining to depart thence, went first to the wounded Knight, whom he found greatly amended of his wounds: and approaching to his bed-side, asked him how he felt himself. Well enough (said he) though with no little grief for my bad succes: yet I am not sorry to be overcome seeing it was by him whose courage and valour the strength of mighty Giants could not abate. But one thing I intreat of you sir Knight, by the Courtesie you have shewn me. you would vouchsafe to tell me your name, that in those places where I shall come, I may publish your haughty deeds. It pleaseth me (replied the Emperor) conditionally, you also let me know yours, with the cause of your coming hither, with the truth whereof thereto such a Knight as you is bound.

I am so desirous to know you, said the Knight, that though it be against the promise I have made, and you promising me to keep it secret, I will not deny it. Thereto I give my faith (answered the Emperor) and first know, I am Don Bellaneo Emperour of Greece, that by a certain Adventure, not far from hence, I parted from my train, the rest having happened as you have seen. Oh immortal Gods, said the Knight, fetching a great sigh: are you he, whose name is so feared among all the Pagan nations: and he that never refused to assault so terrible and fierce Giants: And in brief, he whose invincible mind sheweth how true the everlasting fame of your perpetual deeds is: and through the world of you is spred. Oh great Soldan, now by this days succes, thy determined purpose is utterly made void, having so strong an Adversary left thee in the world. It therefore behoves thee no more to think of peace: And turning to the Emperour, who greatly amazed at his words stood gazing on him, and dissembling his conceived grief. Supposing, renowned Prince, the matter I shall disclose to be of less consequence than it is, I will in few words unfold the truth thereof, though in doing of it, to my self more than

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to any resulteth greatest loss: I know that your name (so fearful among all Gentiles) being published in the Soldan of Siconias Court, with the great destruction of his people made by you, and in all Paganisme, moved him by promise to bind himself to give the one half of his Dominions, with the marriage of his daughter to him, by whose valour your head were brought him. Also promising, that if in the enterprise he died, the half of his said dominions should notwithstanding be granted to his successive heirs. So I understanding the great promise the Soldan had made, and greatly loving his daughter, resolutely resolved, I departed to the Kingdom of Antioch, whereof I am Lord, and with my self having determined what I ought to do, I left my Court, accompanied with 500 Knights, and 30 Giants, purposing at your coming out of your palace, to kill or imprison you, so shipping our selves, we landed not far from hence, left our ships at anchor thither to return with your conquest. And that this we might better compass unknown and unseen, we agreed to take this Castle, and here remain till occasion were offered us to effect this pretence, being informed of the state of all things by a man whom on the coast we took, whereby we hither came as you have heard, and easily thought to have taken it, being minded to let none survive to carry the news abroad: but your incomparable valour hath frustrated our intent. Thus have I declared unto you all that in this case I can, whereto your great bounty and magnanimous clemency forced me: for notwithstanding I had so massacred your subjects, you caused me thus to be cured. My name is Don Galaneo of Antioch, if ever you heard of me before: and so he made an end of his speech. The Emperor rested wonderful amazed seeing with what audacity Don Gallaneo had discovered him a deed of such weight, for which he might greatly fear his deserved punishment: but judged him of haughty courage, considering how confidently he had put himself into his hands, having against him committed so high treachery: and shewing no manner of alteration, made him this answer. Truly Prince Don Gallaneo, you have plainy expressed the valiancy of your mind, in so openly bewraying that which by any other means, I could not have known, whereby you have doubled the cause of my imaginary thoughts, seeing in such a Knight so little shame, that without further consi-

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veration, should by treason seek to spill my innocent blood, which in so great a Prince as you, seemeth more odious than in any other, being by order of Knighthood bound to be vertuous, and abhor all detestable actions, and to be an example to your Subjects, lest against your self they might commit the like. Yet would I not for all my state, you should have had such confidence in me, so to discover your self, that I might (not knowing it) let your own self see your self confounded in your own imaginations. But seeing it is done, here you shall remain in this Castle, till I further determine of your being. Yet for all this (said Don Gallaneo) assure your person, for not far hence is the remainder of my power, and easily may you incur some greater danger, though your person be such as I have tried: yet among them are so fierce and mighty Giants, that will not think much to cleave your body armed in two with one blow. I have thought said the Emperor what in this case shall be done: and thereupon commanded his horse and Don Brianels to be sadled. And Don Brianel foreseeing the peril that might ensue, beseeched the Emperor on his knees to give him the order of Knighthood to serve him in that enterprise, which the Emperour denied, promising to do it another day. But here we leave them and return to the Prince Don Bellianis and Arsileo, whom we left with the Lady in the Cave.

CHAP. V.

How Don *Bellianis* with the Lady departed from the Cave, and by what strange Adventure he and *Arsileo* were Knighted.

IT is recorded by Fristen, that the Prince Don Bellianis, with his cousin Arsileo, remained ten days in the Damsels cave, till the Prince was able to travel, who grieving much for the sorrow the Emperor and the Empress would sustain, and acknowledging how much bound he was to that Lady, determined to depart, yet greatly desired to know the end of that adventure. Wherefore the Prince Arsileo, a day before their departure, intreated her to declare unto them the whole occasion of her being in the cave, and what she would require them to do in her service; although they needed not make many offers, being as they were so bound to her for so many favours, that at her command without intreaty, they ought to do, even with the hazard of their

lives. The damzel with a sorrowful countenance, as one that remembred her fore-passed misfortunes, could not with-hold her tears, but with watry cheeks, and eyes like flowing springs with running streams, at last thus began. I cannot (excellent Princes) so intirely express unto you the cause of my grief, as I could desire, for the great sorrow my grieved heart sustains, suddenly suppressing me, and breaking into a salt shower of brinish tears, will not give place unto the exact utterance of my words, yet as I may, I will do it. I was (most noble Princes) daughter unto Pompeiano (not long since King of Antioch) and am called Aurora, that being at the Soldane of Babylons Court, accompanying his daughter the most beautiful Florisbella, whose perfected beauty, and absolute vertues, so far surpasseth all other of her time, as doth the Sun all lesser Stars. To this Court came a Knight, whose name for a long time was not known, saving by certain Images in his shield, was called the Knight of the three Images, who shewed himself so valiant, that no ten Knights in the whole Court was so strong and hardy, as durst maintain the field against him. This Knight throughout the Soldans Empire performed such deeds of haughty prowels, that in general among all men he was accounted a second Mars, and the Soldan did no less estéem of him, always having him in his company, whereby he thought himself worthy of greater dignities, and so became amorous of the divine Florisbella, for whose love a long time he suffered great grief and much solitude, not daring to manifest it to any: at length, séeing nothing prevail to expel the desire, when one day the Soldan, with all his Court was gone on hunting, he remained alone in the Palace, and after some pleasant discourses, discovered unto me the secrets of his love, intreating me that in his name I would intreat the Princess to accept of him for her Knight; wherewith she finding her self aggrieved, answered, that by no means she would do it, commanding him no more to imagine any such madness, lest the Soldan her father should by chance hear thereof, which if he did, it might cost him little less than his life. But he nothing weighing this her answer, found means that the Princess might know the extreme anguish of his perplexed heart, inthralled by her beauty, so that I thinking that some harm might thereby ensue, declared it to the Soldan, who thereupon

upon commanded him to depart his Empire, but he not knowing the occasion, very heavily before his departure, told him, that what he did was against reason, in commanding him to depart his dominions, for he was a Prince able to shew him that such as he ought not to be so used; and departing the Court towards the Soldan of Siconia, called the great Sophy of Persia, where suspecting I was cause of his exile, began with fire and sword to enter the Kingdom my fathers Territories, in such sort wasting and spoiling them, then slaying the King, he took possession of the whole Kingdom, giving it to the Knight of the Kindred, called the Prince Don Galaneo, reputed a man of great valor. In which time not knowing of his success, I went from the Soldans Court home to my fathers, and fearing to fall in their hands, by counsel of a wise woman called Bellona, entred in a boat with these damsels you here see, together with the said woman, and by her direction arrived in this Country, and was by her conducted to this Cave, where she bad me remain, for I should quickly be delivered by the Prince of Greece, and his cousin of Hungary, fore-telling me every thing that hitherto hath happened: and moreover she bad me give you horses and armor, which here she left, wherewith you shall be knighted by a strange adventure; but what it was she would not tell. Thus have I declared the occasion of my being here; and the fearful Bear the wise woman here left, was hither to bring the Prince Arsileo as you saw, and the mighty Giant which you slew, remained keeper of the Cave, who might not be slain with any weapon, but the sword which you drew out of the Pillar that he guarded, so that (great Lord) the remedy of my misfortune resteth in your hands, and our departure may be when and so soon as you shall think good. I am contented (answered he, wondrous amazed at the Damzels discourse) but I would willingly take with me an hoast of men, that you may more easily recover your Kingdom. I attend here no other hope but yours (said she) and as for any other, I was informed we should not need. Whereat the Prince (seeing that was her will) commanded straight provision to be made for his departure: so all things being ready, they mounted on horse-back, and the Damzels on their Palfreys accompanied with two ancient Knights that carried the armor that the Princess Aurora had spoken of, which they see-

ing, took it forth of the cases, which were as appertained to novel knights. The Prince Don Bellianis armor was of colour Orange-tawny, with a Sea-wave so big, that it seemed to overwhelm a ship there figured. In his shield was pourtrayed the picture of a most beautiful Lady, with a Knight kneeling before her, as if he craved mercy at her hands, from whom she turned her face in answer, with an Inscription to this effect.

Let him dye for so departing,
At our first and sudden meeting:
Leaving thereby my dear sight dim
Of his, when I desired to see him.

Which was written in Arabian Letters, that the Prince well understood. The Prince Arsileos were murry, in the midst whereof was fighting a griffon with a most terrible dragon, which were parted by a Damzel that made peace betwéen them; which when they saw so fair, became desirous to put them on, and causing the Princes and Damsel to stay, were armed with them, which so well fitted them, as if of purpose they had béen forged for them, wherewith being armed, set forwards on their journey, and having gone not far from the cave, spied before them a fair Castle, which till then they had not seen, nor yet when they entred the Cave. The Princess and the Ladies masked themselves, because the heat of the Sun was great, and the rest were disguised that they might not be known, and approaching the Castle they saw two Knights come forth thereof, the one in a white armor like a novel Knight, the other that was bigger of personage, and seemed of great valour, was clad in the richest armour that might be seen, of an azure colour, with many imperial Crowns. In the middle of his shield was figured the image of Mars, as the Pagans use to picture him. These Knights of the Castle led with them a man on Horseback unbooted and unspur'd, and his head musled like a prisoner, which made the Prince desirous to know what they were. As God shall help me (said Arsileo) if I were knighted, I would procure to know those Knights, and why they lead the Knight prisoner. Do not therefore trouble your self (good cousin) said Don Bellianis, for easily may it be done, and so let it be my charge: so going forward, they met a squire that came to them, and said, Sir Knight, my master that is he in the white armor, desireth

you

you by me, because he received this day his order of Knighthood, you would be content to break a lance with him, for seeming no less valiant than courteous, he desireth to try if your deeds do agree with your outward appearance. Tell him (said Don Bellianis) we would willingly accomplish his desire, were we but Knighted, & would gladly receive the order at the Grecian Emperors hands, for this & no other cause letteth us from fulfilling his mind. And you may also tell him (said Arsileo) that were it not for that, it should be commanded him to yield us account of the Knight, what he is, & why they lead him prisoner. The Page returned to his master, and told him that answer, which he reputed to great arrogancy in them; but seeing they expected his answer, he went to them, and somewhat cholerick, he said, Which of you is the Knight that gave my Page so proud an answer? You should not need to ask it (said Arsileo) were we knighted, desiring nothing more than to satisfie your request: but seeing (said the Knight) you go to require that order at the Emperor Bellaneo's hand, to save you that labor, I assure you he is not at Constantinople, nor of him is there any news; and therefore know, that yonder Knight is such a Prince, both in possessions and valor, as the Emperor little surpasseth him, wherefore that our combat may be effected, you may receive the order you seek, of him. Although it were to chastise the madness that possesseth you (replyed Don Bellianis) we will now receive that sacred order, & calling one of the damsels, sent her in their names to the Knight in the azure Armor, who going where he was, thus said, The Knights you see with yonder Ladies (noble Sir) intreat you, seeing they expected the Order of Arms at the hands of the Emperor of Greece, whom your Companion saith is absent from Constantinople, and they supposing you no less noble than valiant in outward shew, to grace them with the said Order, that they may satisfie your Companion, with the breaking of some few Lances, certifying you that without scruple you may do it. (Answered he) though it were better they received it by the Emperor, with those ceremonious Rites as such honor requireth, but seeing they are thus content, it shall be; and so meeting each other with such kind Greetings and Salutations, as if they knew the consanguinity between them; and the Princes requested the Knight again to accomplish their request, they all alighted,

lighted, and he taking their oaths, were knighted, and the Princess Aurora girded Don Bellianis with his sword, whilst the novel knight did the like to Arsileo; which done, they rested so content as they were created the greatest Lords of the world; and the knight imbracing them, said, I pray God, fair knights, that in all things you may attain no less honor, than the royal state of your descent doth require; to whom they rendred great thanks for this kind benediction, and mounted again on horse-back.

CHAP. VI.

The brave and dangerous fight between the two Princes, and the Knights of the Castle.

After the knights were all on horse-back mounted, he in the white armor inraged with kindled wrath of desired revenge against Arsileo, for the arrogant words he had sent him, that with animated courage proceeding from a valiant heart, said to him, Sir knight, If with weapons you dare defend your proud answer sent me by my Page, now have you time to do it. Arsileo hearing this, and being no less furious than he, answered never a word, but turned his horse, and taking so much field as would suffice for his carrier, couched his lance against his adversary, who with no less fury met him in the middle of his course, incountring so rigorously, that their lances flew in small pieces, and meeting with their bodies, the knight of the Castle fell down over his horse-crupper; the like happened to Arsileo, but that he fell on his feet, with the saddle between his legs, for by the strong encounter, the girts broke, so that both astonied at this chance, laid hands to their well-cutting swords, and joyning one to the other struck so strong mighty blows on their well-tempered helms, that it caused a great fear in their companions, each doubting the loss of their friend, for they wounded one another with admirable strength, extremely dangering their flesh, cutting their armor, bruising themselves, spilling their blood in great abundance, yet the knight of the Castle was worse wounded by reason of the good armor Arsileo wore, and being the valiantest knight (next Don Bellianis) in those days. But the knight of the Castle, with the desire he had to overcome his adversary, nothing regarded his wounds: wherefore he in the azure armor being skilfuller in

such

such matters, plainly perceived, that if he gave not over, he either would remain vanquished or slain, yet knew he not how to remedy it, nor how to forbid it, which made him storm like a Lion, seeing no means to prevent the danger like to befal his Friend. On the other side, Don Bellianis viewing the cruel Fight, and though he saw Arsileo more courageously double his blows, yet greatly feared the event thereof, seeing with what nimbleness the other fought. And considering how he might prevent his fear, stept to the Princess Aurora, and craved of her leave to prove himself with the Knight in the azure armor, that he might thereby aid the Prince Arsileo, if he should be put to any disadvantage. The Princess though unwilling condescended, seeing the necessity of the case required. Whereupon he went to the Knight in blew, and said: Although, valiant Sir, it may seem discourtesie, having no occasion to provoke us to fight, yet the necessity of our Companions moves us unto it, and urgeth me now to crave the breaking of a lance with you, whiles the combat dureth, if you please. It doth please me, replied the Knight of the Castle, with this promise, that either of us may help his fellow in his need. The Prince that nothing else wished, was exceedingly content therewith. And so both took that part of the field that they thought meet for their incounters, ran one against the other, their lances couched in their rests, and met so furiously, that the shivers of their Spears flew up into the air out of sight, yet moved one another no more than had they run against a Tower, which greatly amazed the knight of the Castle, having hitherto overthrown to the earth all that ever he jousted with. And so with raging fury upon Don Bellianis, that also made toward him, who before he could defend himself with his shield, received so strong a blow, that it made him lean his head on his horses neck, leaning so astonied, that when the Princess saw it, she was astonied with a cold sweat over all her body, and doubling another on him, the Prince lifted up his shield, which was thrown quite to the ground, but in two, that the fine temper wherewith the wise Bellona did forge it, nothing prevailed against the never conquered arm of that most valiant Knight. But hereat Don Bellianis feeling himself so handled, struck the Knight on his helm, that he supposed the whole weight of some tower had fallen thereon: and the blow lighted with such mighty strength, that

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it had almoſt thrown him down, yet the horſe by the force thereof was forced to ſet his knees on the ground, and his helm, with his armed Head-piece under it, were both cut, and the furious ſword not reſting there, deſcending downward on the horſe, that all his capariſons made of hardeſt ſteel were cut: the impriſoned Knight ſeeing ſo great a blow, cried out and ſaid, I cannot believe that valiant Hector's terror to the Greeks, with all his admirable forces could have given the like blow, and now the Knight hath found his match. But they amazed at each others ſtrength, having again met, beſtowed on themſelves ſuch terrible ſtrokes, that their armor being rent in many places, were grievouſly wounded, and the Knight of the Caſtle turning towards his fellow, ſaw he was ſo weak, through the much blood he had loſt, they greatly pitying him, with new courage redoubled his blows on his adverſary, yet all his toil little availed him, for Don Bellianis ſeeing this was the firſt battel that ever he fought, and grieving that the other Knight ſhould ſo long withſtand him, having endured three hours fight, and loſt his ſhield, and feeling himſelf wounded in many places, took his ſword with both hands, ſtretched himſelf on his ſtirrops, thinking to end the battel with that ſole blow; but the Knight of the Caſtle being very circumſpect in ſuch matters made ſhew to await him, covering himſelf very well with his Shield: And ſeeing the blow came right downward on his head, cloſed between his arms, that he could not ſtrike him, ſave only with his ſword hilts, which was ſo mightily, that he could not for a while feel himſelf: and with the ſtrength thereof the ſword fell out of his hands, hanging at his arm by a little chain, the Knight on the cloſing wounded him on the arm with a thruſt, which reſiſted by the Armor, ran between the harneſs and his elbow, making him no little wound, and Don Bellianis ſeeing him ſo nigh took him between his arms, and ſpurring his horſe, hoyſted him very lightly from the ſaddle: the Knight likewiſe getting hold of him, ſo long ſtrugled together, that both came to the ground, almoſt one foot hanging in the ſtirrop, and bravely holding together, ſtrived to overthrow each other, not daring to looſe their hold, ſo greatly they feared the overmatched ſtrength of one another: while they were thus in this ſtrife, from out of the thickeſt of the wood, they eſpied the number of thirty Knights, and four Giants,

Giants, who seeing the Knight in the Azure Armour in such danger, all spurred against Don Bellianis, not regarding the outcries of the imprisoned Knight, that said they should not hurt him. But he had been slain if they had not feared to arm the Knight in the Azure Armour: who losing the other, and seeing his horse nigh him (though he were greatly wounded) mounted thereon, without setting his foot in his stirrop, with such agility that he made them all marvel, and as one that had done nothing all that day, with a valiant courage, he rushed in among those Knights, and at three blows he slew three. The Prince Arsileo at this time having withdrawn himself to breath, seeing his companion in such danger, not loking to his adversary, leapt on his horse: so did the two old Knights that with the Princess came, but all of them might little prevail against the furious multitudes, with the Knights of the Castle also, that prepared themselves to aid them. Here declareth Friston, that the two first Knights of the Castle were, the Emperor Don Bellaneo, that had Knighted Don Brianel, which was he that fought with Arsileo, having armed himself with Don Gallaneo's armor, and setting him on horseback (as you have heard) meaning to convey himself to Constantinople, the better to pass unknown through his Knights, that where they assailed the Princes, imagining the Emperor to be Don Gallaneo, and therefore so furiously assaulted them as is expressed. But the Emperor fearing that Don Gallaneo (having that opportunity to effect his determination) would discover himself to his Knights, called to him one of those men that came from the Castle, and commanded him with all spèd possible to haste him to Constantinople, and tell the King of Hungary in what necessity he left him, telling him his name, which till that time he had not discovered to any of the Castle. And putting off his gantlet, gave him his Royal seal of Arms, which the King very well knew, commanding him he should with all spèd return. The man greatly amazed, took the Signet, and hasted him to Constantinople, staying nothing by the way, and in short time arrived in the City, which was some five leagues distant from the Castle, and demanded for the King of Hungarie's Palace. It was told him that he was in the Emperors Court, whither he straightways went, and finding him, knèeled before him half speechless and

dismayed, told him in what necessity he had left the Emperor, whereat the King greatly amazed took the King, and saying nothing to the Emperels, commanded the Guard which continually was in the Palace, being above two thousand Knights, to begin to march towards the Castle, commanding all the whole City to arm it self, and follow him, which fearing some sudden Treason to be at hand, raised so great tumult of Armor through the same, that the Inhabitants arose in an uproar, as if with Enemies it had been besieged. And so, though the common people knew the present necessity required spædy haste, were somewhat long ere they set forth. And in their way we leave them, till we have shewen what in the mean season befel the Emperor and the Princes.

CHAP. VII.

The end of the fight between the Emperor and the Princes, against Don *Gallaneo* and his men.

AS soon as the Emperor had dispatched the Messenger to Constantinople, he determined to aid the Knights, that maintained a terrible battel with the Giants, and their Troups being most cruelly wounded, by reason of those remorseless Fiends, the Prince Don Gallaneo, seeing his Knights were deceived, with great out-cries uncovering his face, called to them, who when they heard his voice, and saw his face, streight knew him, greatly amazed at such a chance, and leaving the fight against the Princes, ran to embrace him, not knowing the cause why that Knight should be then armed with his Armor. And though the Emperor let him go toward them, yet could he not stay him. And Don Gallaneo seeing that opportunity was offered him, and not minding to spend his time in spæches with his men, said, Now is it requisite (oh Knights) that you revenge me on him that weareth my Armor. For know, if you take him, or slay him, our enterprise therewith is ended, for he is the Emperor of Constantinople, whom we came from far Countries to seek, being he hath slain my Knights, and took me prisoner, using me as you have seen. The Knights that aimed at no other mark, together in a Troop set upon the Emperor and Don Brianel of Macedon, that was with him. But when Don Bellianis,

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and Arſileo heard that he was the Emperour his Father, greatly grieved, for what with him befel them, and with eager fury, they ſet upon thoſe Traiterous Knights. But theſe damned Giants that came before the reſt, oppoſed themſelves againſt them, ſtriking ſtrong and mighty blows. And one of them raiſing aloft a huge iron mace betwéen his hands, ſtruck the Emperor therewith that if he had not warded it with his ſhield, it had ſhivered his head in pieces; yet it reſted not there, but deſcended on his horſes neck, felling him dead to the ground, with his maſter on his neck. The Emperor for all this ſtruck him on his arms, that he threw them to the earth with the mace betwéen them.

Now there was the Emperor in great danger of his Life. For when his Horſe fell, he tok one of his legs under him, and Don Gallaneo, that had already put on one of the dead Knights Armour coming thither at that time with two other Giants, all the three alighted from their Horſes, intending there to ſtrike off his head. The Prince Don Bellianis that ſaw his Father in that extremity, diſmounting in all haſte went to ſuccour him; but ere he came, Don Gallaneo, as one whom his death would highly advantage, wounded him on the head, and the two Giants with their Maces raiſed aloft, with mighty ſtrength diſcharged them on his head; ſo that he for that time not able to draw him from under his horſe, with one blow overthrew Don Gallaneo, cutting aſunder his ſhield and helm, and grievouſly wounded him on the head. And being about to avoid thoſe Giants blows, could by no means ſhun them, but both diſcharging their Helliſh fury on his head, made him bow to the earth, and ſo ſtagger'd him that he could ſcarce ſtand. And though the ſpacious world, contained not his like for admirable ſtrength, yet with ſeeing his Father in that caſe, and himſelf ſo handled by ſuch infernal monſters, glorying in nothing but bloody cruelty, abhorring all good and decent order of equal Martial Diſcipline, ſo doubled his undaunted courage in himſelf, ſtruck at one of the Giants heads, who thinking to defend it by croſſing his Mace over his Helme, had it cut clean in two, hard by the handle; and the Furious Sword lighted on the horſe-girts that lay on the Emperor, that cutting them on both ſides, he gave his Father liberty to draw

his leg away, pushing the horse away from him, quickly arose, yet very weary, and seeing how Don Bellianis with one side how he reached one of the deformed Giants with great strength upon his Thigh, and felled him to the ground, and how with another he maintained a hot fight. And he also saw that Don Brianel and Arsileo with eight Knights that came out of the Castle to succour them, were in a fierce battel with the other Giant and Knights. And that Arsileo being busied with a Giant, the other Knights being in number greatly inferiour to their enemies, were by them put to the worse: wherefore the Emperor went to aid them: but ere he arrived, the Giant and Arsileo having closed, dismounted each other, that the Giant leaving his foot in the stirrop, Arsileo spurred his horse backward, making him run away, and drag his Master after him, who within a while breathed his last. And so he turned with the Emperour courageously to help their companions, and arrived when their adversaries were little able to make them longer resistance, specially because Don Bellianis had slain the other Giant: At which instant arriving where he was, scarce Ten of them remained with Life, which to save themselves Fled into the Woods. Whereupon they alighted (not minding to pursue them) to bind their wounds.

But scant had the Emperor time to render due thanks for their great help, much admiring their exceeding valour, when the rest of Don Gallaneo's Knights issued from the thickest of the grove, who being advertised of the success of their enterprize, and not of their loss, came in great hast to participate of the glory they should obtain by the Emperors death.

Before them came those stern and ugly Giants, with their Lances, seeming huge pine Trees, with such tempestuous fury, that they had not leisure to bind their deep Wounds. Great was the sorrow the Emperour hereby sustained, seeing the stay of the King of Hungary: but as neither he nor the other Knights could by death seeming terrour be Daunted, with a courageous heart thus he said. Now is the time (brave Knights) that you must shew the magnanimity of your invincible minds, since in your first adventure fortune hath so directed you that the glory of the forepassed worthies, by the victory of this one battel shall be extin-

extinguished, though herein we yield the Tribute of our Lives to all conquering death, which being natural to all men, should least be feared: but in the omnipotent powers of him, that this circled universe did frame, I do trust he will not permit the valour of such Knights, in such short time to perish, but so strengthen them, that the perpetual fame of their royal acts may remain eternized to all succeeding ages. Little need we to be encouraged to suffer the fearful stroke of Death (replyed Arsileo) for where the person of so victorious an Emperour is indangered, ours can be but the least of all most little losses. I thought no less (answered the Emperour) but I will speak it, that my self imitating your valour, might encourage my decaying courage by your discreet reply, by which since I perceive you rest undaunted, and animated against ensuing dangers it behoved us, lest we be suddenly assaulted and overthrown with their horses, which greatly will hazard us, that we take before us yon Knight that lyeth upon the ground, meaning Don Gallaneo, that very sorely wounded, lay without his helm, for these that come towards us be his men, and fearing to hurt him, will not molest us with their horses. This will be very good, said Don Bellianis, as also that one of those Knights speedily conduct those Ladies into the Castle, for I do more regard their safety, than I esteem my own life. So effecting all things, they on foot expected the coming of the Giants and Knights, which were above 500 in number, who approaching, were greatly amazed to see that slaughter of Knights and Giants, which if their Knights that fled had not told them of, they would not have believed it. Hereupon two of the foremost Giants, with a cousin of Don Gallaneo's, called Don Galfeo the unknown, thinking to over-run them with their horses, perceived they defended themselves with Don Gallaneo, wherefore they commanded all their Knights to alight on foot, which they would by no means do, because they saw coming from the City a great troup of Knights, which so soon arrived, as had they alighted, with little trouble they had all been slain, yet notwithstanding some ten of them dismounted together, making account to end that fight with the Emperors death: whilst the rest went against the Knights that from the City marched, for being in a strange Land they reputed every one their enemy. But the K. of Hungary that was he which came with

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the Knights, in such extreme forefeeing the danger like to ensue, commanded his men to wheel about to the further side, compassing so much field, that with safety they might arrive where the Emperor and the other Knights were combating, fearing that if they should encounter with their enemies, the Emperor might in the mean time be slain, and their haste and aid come in vain: the Knights being all chosen and valiant, such as continually guarded the Emperors person, and sufficient every one to be a Commander of many took their compass in such manner, that without turning their backs on their adversaries or breaking their lances, fell on sudden where the Emperor and Princes were, whom they found fighting like angry Lions, for that Don Brianel was piteously wounded by two Giants, and by them beaten to the ground, so that the Emperor & Don Bellianis to defend him, bestirred themselves so bravely against them, esteeming them but as two common Knights. On the other side the Prince Arsileo kneeled with his knee on the ground, for one of the Giants had thrust him quite through the thigh. But when the King of Hungary arrived with his men, he alighted with some twenty Knights, leaving the rest in fight with their adversaries, whereof some being round beset with Grecians, the others set themselves against Don Bellianis, seeing he was the sole causer of their utter ruine, and notwithstanding his mighty blows two of those Giants closed with him: but he not dismaid therewith laid hand on his dagger, which at his back continually he wore, and stabbed it in the Giants back that held him betwixt his arms, which done, with mighty strength it ran through his body to the hilts. Which was not so speedily performed but the other wounded him grievously, that his armour being in three places rent, and his flesh in many places bruised and cut, and seeing himself in such notorious peril, took the heavy boistrous Giant in his arms, and with his puissant forces hoisted him aloft, and with a mighty fall tumbled him to the earth, where presently he chopt off his head: which done turning to the Emperor, he saw him close with another Giant, and fearing some sinister hap might befal him through the much blood issuing from his wounds, whereat the Prince greatly wondred how he could stand on foot, strook the Giant such a blow on the leg, that he sundred it quite from the body. All which notwith-

withstanding seeing the number of the Knights still increase upon them, & that the trampling of the horses might greatly endanger them, & doubting that the Emperor seeing he had lost much blood, would not be able to mount a horseback, took him in his arms, and set him on the Giants horse he last slew. The like did he to the Prince Arsileo, that through the wound on his thigh could not do it himself: and greatly esteeming Don Brianel, for that he had seen him that day do, and because he came in his fathers company, he took him from the ground & commanded a Knight to convey him to the castle, there to apply him such remedies, as that he might recover his lost senses. And howat the last when he would get a horse for himself, could not so easily compass it, for all the rest of the Knights had turned themselves with a hellish fury upon him where he was like to be slain outright: for Don Galfeo having vanquished the Emperors men set on him, wounding him with cruel and remorseless blows. But finding himself encompassed with death, began to strike on every side, that unhappy was he on whom any lighted, for so fearful and deadly they were that with six blows he struck down three Knights and two Giants, and seeing Don Galfeo was he that most molested him, strook at his leg with such strength, that had the sword fallen with the edge downright, it had cut it clean off, yet it rased away all the armour there, and seeing him within his reach, plucked his shield out of his hand, and with it beat him to the ground from himself, and so none dating molest him, without setting foot on stirrop he mounted on Don Galfeo's horse. At this time hither came the Emperor, that seeing him so nimbly mounted, being sorely wounded, was so amazed that he hardly believed what his eyes beheld; and that which he most admired was to see him so fierce and courageous in this first adventure that ever happened him. And emulating his valiant deeds, he followed him as if he were his teacher, and he his pupil, to whom Don Bellianis being nigh him, said, Methinks Sir Knight our men begin to lose the field, so think I, answered the Emperor, and calling Arsileo, joyned all three together with the King of Hungary that was in the vauntguard, animating his fainting Knights, that with fresh courage so gallantly returned to the fight, as if at that present they began, giving and receiving most terrible blows of those hell-burned

Giants,

Giants. But Don Bellianis ſéeing the wonders the Emperor his Father had performed, imagining his own acts none in compariſon of his, with ſuch vehement rigour he aſſaulted his Foes, that his men regained their loſt advantage. About this time Don Galſeo aroſe from his Trance, and ſéeing his Knights retired back and that the moſt part of the Giants were ſlain, and that great Troops of armed Knights, not far from whence they were Fighting, came with ſpéedy haſt toward them, which he judged to be above two thouſand, and ſéeing his intent could not for that time take effect, turned to Don Gallaneo, that lay by him, and taking one of thoſe Horſes, that loſe came about, called one of the Knights, commanding him to ſet the Prince his couſin before him very ſecretly, unknown to the Emperour, and the reſt, he put himſelf through the grove, and learning of a man whom he met the nert way to the Sea coaſt, went thither, where finding his ſhips, and fearing he might be purſued, ſtripped himſelf, & Don Gallaneo, commanding the Mariners to hoyſt the ſails, and put unto the Sea: which they ſtraight did, laying his couſin on a bed in his Cabin, and applied to him many remedies, to recover his ſenſes, that the better they might dreſs his wounds: where we leave them, returning to declare the end, and ſucceſs of the battel.

CHAP. VIII.

How the Battel being ended, *Don Bellianis* with his company departed, not diſcovering whom they were. And what happened to him and his Couſin, with the Ladies in the dangerous Grove.

The battel reſting in this manner as is before recited very cruel and bloody on all parts, the like whereof to that day was never ſéen of ſo few Knights, the one ſide reſolving to effect their enterprize, which by the victory of that battel would be by the Emperors death, drew ſtrength whence none was, judging it better in that fight to do well revenging their own deaths, than to abide the mercy of the Emperour, of whom they none expected. On the other ſide the Emperours Knights being of ſuch valour as is expreſſed, and guided by ſuch Captains, Fought ſo couragiouſly with their adverſaries, that forcing them to retire

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most of them left their Lives in the Field. About this time appeared, along the way from the City so many Squadrons of Knights, that they covered all those fields, keeping no order in their march, Galloping so fast that quickly they arrived where that unequal Battel was Fighting: who being by the Pagans seen, straight put themselves to flight, thinking to save themselves in the Thickets of the woods. But the Emperors Knights then arriving so bravely assaulted them, that having no time to execute their purpose, they were all put to the sword, none surviving to carry news home of their overthrow. The Emperor and Princes remained so wounded, that although the joy of their great victory eased the pains of their wounds, yet thought they could not scape with Life, for the quantity of blood issued from them was so great, that the horses were altogether besmeared therewith. But the Emperor seeing how much bound he was to those Knights, with great gladness ran to Don Bellianis, whom he so much prized for his haughty Chivalry, that he judged all others in comparison of his, but a dream. The Prince Don Bellianis did the like; and going to dismount on Foot, to shew his humble duty, the Emperor would not permit it, but holding him in his arms, said,

If (most excellent Knight) you regard what you have done for me, and from what great dangers you and your company have delivered me, more reason were if I should kiss your hand, in sign of acknowledging the great benefit that by your magnanimity I have received, which no less than with my life I should remunerate: in satisfaction whereof, I pray the Almighty Lord that hath delivered us from so great danger and peril to guerdon you for it: for if I should invest you Lord of all my Empire, you could not rest satisfied for the least part of your deserved merits this day obtained. Wherefore, henceforth I will hold this Monarchy, not as absolute commander thereof, but as given me by your hands, and as your deputy to keep it, acknowledging my lawful homage for the same, at all times when you shall command.

The Prince Arsileo coming thither at that instant, not letting Don Bellianis answer the Emperour lest thereby he might be known, being loth to discover themselves, by reason

of their promise made to the Damsels thus replied. What to day this Knight hath in your service done (most mighty Emperour) deserveth no recompence, nor yet words of ceremonious thanks, for more than this every one knowing the Royalty of your person is bound unto, and now we resting more than satisfied with the good will wherewith you seem to accept this our small service, and having no more need of us at this present, we instantly beseech you to grant us leave, that sending for our Damozels we may hence depart; for our abiding here may be very dangerous unto us.

In very deed (victorious Knight) I tell you (replyed the Emperour) there is now a greater battel represented me, than the last: For I cannot believe in Knights so magnanimous in heroical deeds, there should be such discourtesie, as to depart leaving on me the burthen of ingratitude, in making me suffer you to go so grievously wounded, when your deserts merit much satisfaction; and that which most tormenteth me, is you should desire to depart, not revealing unto me your names, that at least I might know to whom my thanks are due. And you most excellent Knight (turning to Don Bellianis) do I intreat to do it, which if you also deny me, I here protest to follow you about the world till I learn it, and joyning it to the enterprize I have undertaken in demand of my Son Don Bellianis, and of his Cousin Arsileo, I will not return to Constantinople, till I also know this I now request of you.

Don Bellianis fearing to be known, altered his speech, and answered: I cannot but confess the high discourtesie that we commit (most glorious Emperor) in disobeying the supream command of so great a Monarch, whose immortal fame deserveth the whole earths (and chiefly our) obedience. But men being subject voluntarily to promise, and tied by necessity to observance, forceth us by disobeying you, to observe our forepassed word to one of the Ladies that be within the Castle, which was not to discover our selves to any, until we were out of the Empire, lest thereby we should be detained. And as for the demand you undertake of the Princes your Son and Cousin, you may account it ended, for they be living, and not long ago were before this Castle, whom I and this my companion have seen toge-

together: and this we assure you to be true because we know them very well, and also they told us, how being on hunting, they were by a certain adventure parted from you and your train in the dangerous grove, which is far from hence. Wherefore in lieu of this promise and news, we intreat you any longer not to stay us, nor further to inquire of our affairs, nor names, seeing it lieth not in our powers to declare.

The Emperor being about to reply, the King of Hungary came to them, that returned from pursuing his enemies, to whom the Emperor said; it behoveth you King of Hungary to constrain these Knights to abide with us; for I cannot entreat it: They will not do so I am sure (answered the King) especially at your request. I say I cannot obtain it, said the Emperour, yet have they told me news of my son and yours, and that it is not long since they departed away from them, and for all this will they not tell me their names. They are altogether so unworthy to be known, said Arsileo, that it is unnecessary to require them. But if it may please your Majesty we would gladly know the cause wherefore these Knights would have slain you, though in the beginning methought they meant it by us.

The Emperor thereupon told them the whole occasion, as is already mentioned, at which instant the Princess Aurora coming thither with her Ladies, and hearing the Emperor name Don Gallaneo, said to Don Bellianis. The greatest part of our enterprise (Sir Knight) were finished, if the traitor were taken, whereupon they commanded him to be sought for about the field, but could not find him, yet in the search they met the man that directed Don Galseo to the sea coast: of whom by the signs and tokens of their armour, they learned that they had fled from the battel, whereof the Emperor was exceedingly sorry, to whom Don Bellianis thus spake. Afflict not your self (dread Lord) about him, for it is the enterprize I undergo by this Ladies command, and if I live, I protest and promise you that the first time he falls into my hands (though it be before the Soldane his Lord) to give him his death. I would not have you take such pains (said the Emperor) but over-passing that, let me again intreat you to stay the curing of your wounds in this Castle. We may here abide no longer (replied Don Bellia-

nis) and so taking their leaves (the Prince sending for his shield, which was brought him in two pieces) they straight departed, so sorely wounded as may be imagined, for he that had least of them both, had above twenty very dangerous wounds, chiefly that which Arsileo had on his thigh, & the thrust that Don Bellianis had, which seemed to penetrate his entrails. In this manner going on their way the space of three miles, ascending a high mountain, to find some place to dress their wounds, and having cut and gathered a great number of branches and boughs, the damsels made some arbours for the Knights, having left behind the two old men, with many others: for seeing them fall from their horses, they supposed them slain in the fight:) and with their Gowns, Towels and Scarfes covered them, and after they had unarmed them, with such things as they had, dressed their wounds: which were so deep and dangerous, that they greatly lamented, certainly thinking that they could not scape Death. And leaving them alone to repose their wearied bodies, told it their Lady, who bitterly wept for their peril, as if she had seen them dead, so much she credited her Damsels words, knowing their skill in that mystery to be singular. But being thus in their laments, they saw a chariot coming through the air, which seemed to be made of white transparent Crystal of the mount: it was drawn with sixty ugly Gryffons, that put the Princess and her Ladies in great fear, which Chariot alighted in the place where the Knights lay. From it descended two very little dwarfes, that were going to the Prince Don Bellianis with a chearful voice, and said: We are messengers sent from the wise Bellona, who for great Love she beareth you, and the Prince your cousin, knowing in what danger your lives be in, and how nigh death approacheth, to crave your tributary duty, by reason of your great wounds (for although these Ladies be very skilful in this art, yet you cannot without great danger be cured, unless it be by her, and also because the Emperors men are seeking for you, and will not be long ere they come hither) she hath sent you this Carr, in which she requires you, that without longer delay, both you with the Princess and her Ladies mount speedily thereon, for that the Emperor hath straight need of the self same remedy, and in dalliance he may incur much peril

of

of his Life. Whereupon they seeing that more than the present danger could not happen unto them, agreed thereto, and taking the Princess and her Ladies, they all mounted on the Chariot, though the Ladies with some fear did it. But ere we more speak of them, we must remember what befel the Emperor, after the battel was ended.

CHAP. IX.

What the Emperour did after the Princes departure, how he knew how they went.

SOon after the Emperor saw the adventure ended to his high honour, he rendred immortal thanks to the Almighty for his delivery, and with the news he had of his dear Son and Cousin, nothing regarded his wounds, whereupon the King of Hungaria said; Have a care dread Soveraign to cure your wounds, if you will enjoy the victory you have atchieved, for it will be no small thing to escape with Life being so piteously wounded. My joy is so great, answered the Emperor, that were it not moderated with seeing these Knights go with so dangerous wounds, in my defence and liberty from this days peril, that only were a sufficient remedy to heal me without further cure. But believe me (if as I hope) I do escape this danger, recovering my almost lost life, I will not desist till by some means I know who, and whence they be, that so well revenged me: and commanding all the wounded to be convey'd to the City, he returned to the Castle, leaving the King of Hungaria to make provision of all necessaries, and himself was laid in his bed: where his wounds being dressed, his Surgeons thought it impossible he should without great hazard of his Life escape them.

Whereat the people sorely grieved, chiefly seeing that a while after he was dressed, through the intollerable pain of the wound in his head, he spake many things without reason, as a man distract of sense, and half Lunatick, which was judged as tokens of his death, so that none dared to carry any such tidings to Constantinople. But thus fearing his untimely end, there came a damsel to the King of Hungary, that having causes the wounded Knights to be conducted to be cured, rested greatly discontent

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for the Emperours danger) and with a merry semblance said to him. Do not grieve most noble King, for the hour is not come, that so royal and most glorious a Prince should thus suddenly leave the world, therefore lead me straight unto his presence, and you shall see wonders by me wrought. The amazed King replying never a word, took her by the hand, and brought her to the Castle, and set her in the chamber, where the Emperor lay in the state afore recited, more like a dead than a living creature. The Damsel in the entring drew forth of a little Box certain Dyntments that she brought with her, wherewith the Emperor lying in a trance received his vital senses, and with a faint voyce, said. Oh mighty Saviour of the world, I do beseech thee, if so it may please thy high omnipotency, not to take this transitory life from me, before I have seen my dear, dear Son, that in the end of my pilgrimage, I may with comfort die. You shall not yet die (said the Damsel) therefore strengthen your self, for you must ere you die suffer many perils ordained by the divine power of the highest Lord. And if your heart will serve to drink this potion I bring, you shall presently be restored to your former health: and fear not to drink it, for I am come from those Knights that aided you. So drawing forth a little glass, wherein was a certain composition so odoriferous, that the Emperor and all that were present, were gladly comforted with the smell, the Emperor taking it in his hand, fearless drank it off. And at that instant he felt himself so well, as he had never been wounded or ill at all. And rising to thank her, she went the way she came, and commanded the King of Hungary to follow her, who astonished at the Emperors sudden recovery, knew not whether he slept or waked: but following her, she stayed him, and said. Tire not your self (renowned King of Hungary) in seeking me: But know thou, the Emperor was aided by the nearest kinsman he and you have, wherewith she flang away so swiftly, that she seem'd to outstrip the wind, and suddenly vanished out of sight.

And here the History declareth this was the sage Bellona, who greatly tendering the love of Don Bellianis, did for his sake so cure the Emperor, for otherwise his death had been surer than his Life. The King of Hungary amazed with these things,

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as alſo (knowing in what danger the Emperor had been in) to ſee him now come forth of his chamber, demanded him what was become of the Lady: to whom he told all that had paſſed, and what ſhe ſaid.

I cannot think then (replyed the Emperor) whom thoſe ſo valiant Knights may be, having my ſelf Knighted them. Truſt me not (anſwered the King) if they were not our loſt Sons, for we have no nigher kinſmen, and your Knighting them aſſureth it to be true, as alſo the news themſelves told you. Who can believe, ſaid the Emperor, if they were them, they would ſo depart from me? wherefore I will have all theſe men ſeparate themſelves, to ſeek them about the Foreſt; for being wounded they cannot be far gone, and ſomewhere they may be alighted to bind their wounds. So commanding all the Knights to do it, they went to viſit the Prince Don Brianel, having heard he was in no leſs danger than the Emperor; and going into his chamber, they neither found him nor ſign of him, but upon his beds head they found a Letter witten in Greek to this effect.

This is meant by the Prophecy in the 2 Book and 7 Chapter.

In the time to come that the brave Lyon of the houſe of *Grecia* ſhall be put in greater danger by the unknown Lyon, defender of his Royal blood, ſhall alſo by the orient hearts, through the means of their unjuſt Prince, be put in greater peril than the laſt whereof by him he was delivered, wherein all the power of my knowledge ſhall be tryed, the moſt part of them being abſent. And thou great Emperor that this readeſt, deſiſt from the demand of thy Son and Knights, and by no means put thy ſelf in their queſt, for thy Empery will greatly need thee (though not ſo ſoon.) This I write thee, that thou mayeſt know the fame of thy glorious deeds will be extinguiſhed by the light of the new Knight to thy greater eternity. Therefore do no otherwiſe than this my Letter requireth thee, for I wiſh all thine affairs may ſucceed according to thy own deſires, which goodwill the preſent remedy thou didſt receive by my Damzel well doth approve.

The Emperor having read the Letter, reſted greatly confuſed

fused cherewith, and turning to the King, said. What think you we may do, concerning this letter's command? I think (answered the King) since you know the writers wisdom and zeal toward you, you ought to execute the same. Let us await the return of our Knights, replyed the Emperor, and then we will depart, for I greatly desire to tell the Empress these news: and loking out of a window of the Castle, they saw coming from the City great multitudes of Knights, seeming above 30000. What shall we do, said the Emperor, if we should have a greater conflict than that which is past? I think those be your ensigns (replyed the King) and loking more earnestly toward them, perceived plainly they were the same. For when it was bruted about the City, (not knowing the number of assailent that had beset the Emperour) all the Knights there, with Citizens, Souldiers, and their leaders, armed themselves and came to rescue their Emperor. With them came the old Prince of Macedon, then arrived in the City, and also the Empress Clarinda, that would by no means stay, though by the way she understood the whole success of the Fight, but would go to visit the Emperor, who then descended to receive them: to whom the Leaders, and the rest humbled themselves, with unspeakable joy to see him safe. And when he knew the Empress was there, without farther stay went to her, where she was, to recount their glad greetings. What hath become of you (my most dear Lord) (said the Empress) for I perceive you have not been at no great pastime, so many sluggard Knights lying in field, for all I see your person woundless: and tell me where is the Prince Don Brianel? Things have befallen me (answered he) that require long time to relate, Therefore alight and weel enter the Castle where I will tell you all. So while they were at supper the Knights Jousted and tilted about the field one with another, for Joy of the Emperors safety; and the Tables being taken up, after some discourse, the Empress understanding their success with the damsels, and how they thought that those Knights were Don Bellianis and Arsileo, she scarce could contain her self with joy, though somewhat moderated it with fear of their great and dangerous wounds. May it not by some means be known (said she) if they were them? We know

know no more (replyed the King of Hungary) than what is said. But the Emperor remembring the two old Knights, that with them came, and seeing at their departure they went not with them, said to the King, saw you not when you remained to see the wounded cured, among them two old knights? They be in this other lodging, said the King, and because they were so grievously wounded, I durst not send them to Constantinople. Let us go visit them (said the Empress) and so went to their chambers, whom they found in great pain by reason of their wounds; to whom the Empress thus spake; How feel you your selves? good Knights fear not, for you be in a place, where you shall well be lookt to, and shall want nothing needful for your health. They in their pain, thinking her to be their Lady (answered) We are not so sorry for our wounds, as that we think Don Bellianis slain, and you and we imprisoned, for of the battel with his Father he had, and his Cousin with the other Knight rested wonderously wounded, and after so many assaulting them, we cannot chuse but judge them dead; yet since we see you at liberty, we beseech you tell us the success of the same Fight, and how the Princes remained, it being ended. The Empress with great joy perceiving by these words, that the Knights which so valiantly behaved themselves in the battel were the Princes, her Son and Cousin, And turning to the Emperor, said, What say you now Sir? is not the King of Hungaries suspicion well verified: The Emperor with wonderful gladness straight went to the Field, where his Knights were with many Dukes, and great Lords, and meeting with the Duke of Trebento, delivered unto him those good news; whereupon it was presently spread among all the people, how the Knight that had performed such deeds of Chivalry in the battel, was their Prince, and his companion was the Prince Arsileo his Cousin: whose unspeakable joy for these news, cannot sufficiently be expressed, greatly praising God that they had so magnanimous a Prince to govern them after his Father. The Empress that remained with the old Knights, desirous to know more of them, discovered her self, though against her will, and said, I am not she, good Knights, whom peradventure you take me for, and therefore I pray you tell me what fortune conducted me hither:

The Knights then recovering their ſenſes, were very ſorry ſhe was not their Princeſs with whom they had ſpoken: and ſeeming not to mark her, made no anſwer, but began to groan as through pain of their wounds. The Empreſs leaving them, went out of the Chamber, and commanded them to be again dreſſed, continuing there with the Emperor ſix days, in which time, the two Knights were greatly amended of their wounds, of whom they knew the whole truth of the adventure which Don Bellianis had undertaken; of which the Emperor was exceeding glad, determining to aid them with men ſufficient for ſuch an enterprize. So he and all the reſt departed to Conſtantinople, where many and divers triumphs, and games were ordained, and the Emperor Knighted two of the Duke of Trebento his Sons, that in thoſe games won great honour, the one called Don Caſtidel of the Roſe, the other Don Sabian of Trebento, whoſe notable deeds ſhall be at large declared: and another, the Son of the Duke of Ponto named Don Perſiano the courteous, and alſo the King of Argos Son, by name Don Bryamore, with many more, all which departed to ſeek Don Bellianis, thinking to find him at Antioch, changing their upper garments, and armor, according to the Moriſcoes: in which journey we leave them, and the Emperor that minded to ſend thither a great hoſt of men, and go himſelf in perſon, and now muſt we turn our courſe to Don Bellianis, chief ſubject of our labours, whom with his company, we left in the Chryſtalline Carr, drawn through the ayr by the inchanted Griffons, as heretofore is mentioned.

CHAP. X.

What happened to the Prince drawn in the Griffons Chariot. How they were cured of their wounds by the ſage *Bellona*: and after, how they all departed toward *Antioch*.

DOn Bellianis and Arſileo, having mounted the Chariot, guided by the Dwarfs, with the Princeſs and her Damſels, as before is recited, not knowing whither they might be conducted, were ſo ſwiftly drawn by the Griffons, that in very ſhort time they were within the Kingdom of Perſia: not far from the great City of Perſepolis; and on the deſolateſt mountains of all that land, the Griffons deſcended, hard by the mouth of a dark and obſcure cave, from whence came forth an old

old woman, above two hundred years of age, who coming before the weary and faint Princes, kneeled to them, desiring that she might kiss their hands. But when she would rise, she was straight known of the Princess, who greatly joying with her sight, embraced her, accounting her no less than if she were her own mother: and turning to Don Bellianis said, now will our affairs most excellent Prince happily proceed, for I tell you this is the sage Bellona, that hath brought us hither by this means, so that now I have utterly exiled the fear I conceived of your wounds. The Prince seeing her so nigh him, very lovingly embraced her: the like did Don Arsileo, to whom the old woman spake. Let me intreat you my good Lord to alight, that with diligence your wounds may be cured, together with the other Knight your champion, whom I have within this Cave, that with no less necessity than your selves I have hither brought. The Prince recording the Dwarfs words when he mounted the Chariot, demanded whether it was the Emperor his father. No my good Lord (said she) for there is no reason that in so perillous a time he should leave his Empire, your self being absent: but it is the Prince Don Brianel of Macedon. Then tell me (said Don Bellianis) how remaineth the Emperor my father? Well, lusty, and merry, (replyed she,) for he hath learned who you were, that in the battel aided him. But how came he to know it? demanded Arsileo: whereupon she told them how. I am sorry for it (said Don Bellianis) for they will condemn us of discourtesie. That is no matter (replied she) besides they will not take it in ill part, knowing you did it to observe your word. I pray you (said he) how was my father so soon healed? for unless I be deceived, he was grievously wounded: Straight shall you know it (said she) and leading them through the Cave, she brought them to a Palace, which they judged to be the stateliest that they ever saw, where with the help of many of the Sages Servants, they dismounted, with whose diligent service they rested much contented, and being laid on rich beds, the grave Matron said to them, having searched their wounds, I could at once cure your wounds, as I did the Emperors, and Don Brianels, but do it not because I will keep you here a few days: and assure your selves you shall be straight out of all danger. And then

she applied such Ointments, wherewith they felt themselves greatly comforted & eased, as if they had no pain at all. Don Bellianis intreated her that they might see the Prince Don Brianel. You shall (said she) but first rest a while, for you have thereof great need: and commanding the windows to be shut, took the Princess by the hand, and leaving the Knights led her through a long Gallery not far from thence that reached to another lodging of the same making that Don Bellianis was in, so curiously wrought, and of so rare workmanship, that the Ladies greatly admired it: and entring into another room: they found the Prince Don Brianel walking alone, already healed of his wounds, yet having lost much blood, he looked very pale and wan: for the sage Patron greatly commiserating his danger, provided as heretofore is specified. For when she went to cure the Emperor, she made one of her damsels to enter another way unseen, and fetching him thence, brought him thither in a trance, and for all he was healed with the drink that Bellona gave him, yet knew he not in what place, or in whose power he was, neither knew he whether he was in prison or at liberty, nor in what state the battel remained, in which he left the Emperor: and seeing his wounds whole, was in such wonder, that almost perswaded himself, waking out of a dream, and seeing no body with whom he might speak, walking up and down the Chamber, seeking and devising how by some means he might resolve his confused thoughts: and when he saw the Princess Aurora and her damsels, with the old woman leading her by the hand, he straight knew her garments, for as is said, he saw her before he and Arsileo had begun their combat: with whose sight he thought that he and the Emperor were imprisoned, by the Knights with whom they had commenced their battel, and yet knew he not how that might be, having after seen them aided by the Emperor against Don Gallaneo's Knights: but seeing them so nigh him, thought that though he were in the prison (as he imagined) yet ought he use that behaviour that his state required, and seeing they were Ladies, approached with that courtesie which might beseem one accompanied with such Knights. And she having learned of the old woman, who he was, humbled her self at his feet: which he unable to disturb, did the like, desiring her to grant him her fair hands that he might

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kiſs them: but they ſo long ſtrived to ſurpaſs each other in courteſie, that Bellona commanded them to riſe, for their ſtate forbad ſuch ceremonies betwæn them: which they did, though not ſo fræ as at firſt, for they reſted greatly affectionate either of other, and Don Brianel at laſt thus broke ſilence. I do ſo wonder at the marvellous things that ſince yeſterday have happened me, that I know not if any ſuch have bæn or no, for being with the Emperor my Soveraign in battel, wherein I remained ſore wounded, and not knowing the end thereof, I find my ſelf at this preſent well and ſtrong, and in this rich and ſumptuous Chamber, with whoſe like the whole world cannot compare, nor yet know whether I be at liberty or captive; though under the power of ſuch kæpers, I ſhould imagin ſuch reſtraint a greater comfort to my grief, than any I can deſire. Wherefore excellent Lady, I intreat you, if you be in the ſame caſe that I am in (as one that I ſuppoſe was preſent at all that befel) you would declare it me, and that I may alſo with your favour know the true ſucceſs of the battel, and what is become of the moſt haughty Knights that accompanied you, whoſe mighty ſtrength I am ſure the whole earth cannot equal, and for what cauſe I am here kept, whether with or without your will: Whileſt he uttered theſe words, the Princeſs earneſtly viewed him, and remained ſo greatly ſatisfied with his good diſpoſition (being a very gallant Knight) and ſæing reaſon willed her to anſwer all his demands, thus replied. Not without cauſe may you be confounded in your imaginations (excellent Prince) for I aſſure you, if now you enjoy your life, it is by your being here: and though the battel was fought nigh Conſtantinople, at this inſtant you are not ſo near it, as to the Riphean mountains, joining upon the great City of Perſepolis, for all which you may thank this grave Patron that here is with me, ſeeing by her great knowledge you hither were conducted. The Knights with whom you in the beginning combated and came in my company, are the Prince Arſileo that with you fought, the other, whoſe battel was with the Emperor, is his Son Don Bellianis. Is it poſſible: Oh God, ſaid, Don Brianel, that Don Bellianis ſhould with ſuch glory principate his haughty dæds of Chivalry. Account theſe the leaſt (ſaid Bellona) for I tell you neither the Emperor

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his father, nor any Knight this day living, may with him compare. Certainly I think no less (replied Don Brianel) and more than you say dare I believe of that courageous Prince, having seen him perform such surpassing wonders in that one fight. But I beseech you let me know the end thereof, and how the Emperor and he do? The Emperor is well (said she) and the Princes both be in this House where you are, though sore wounded. Now I assure you, answered Don Brianel, I account my self most happy, that after so many troubles I hear the most contented news that my perplexed soul could wish, after the tempestuous passage of a boystrous storm, with the calm approach of the all-comforting sun. Wherefore let us without longer stay go visit them, and there may I know what else happened in this adventure. Even when you please (said Bellona) for I know they will no less joy with your sight than you with theirs. So taking him between them, they returned the way they came to the chamber where they left the Princes, and entring it, they found them talking together of their last adventure. But when the Princes saw Don Brianel, they would rise to reverence him, but he turning to Don Bellianis beds side, bended his knee to the ground, craving he might kiss his hands. The Prince took him up, and imbracing so held him a while and said. I do greatly rejoyce, renowned Prince, to see you so well, though according to your great deeds in the battel whereby you got many dangerous wounds, I thought we should not so soon see you, for which let us thank this Lady that comes with you, seeing she took such care of your safety, which with all our states we cannot sufficiently recompence, having (next unto God) by her means recovered our lost lives. Therefore I think it reason (said Don Brianel) seeing she was the instrumental cause we repossess them, we in her service to the death use them, that at least thereby we may seem to satisfie some parts of her many deserts, and so intreat her to command them as her own, whereunto she thus answered. It sufficeth me great Lords, to have done some service to such Princes, which doth surpass all satisfaction whatsoever I may of you receive: how much the more, that will not be so little which you must undertake, in behalf of this disinherited Princess my Cousin, wherewith this resteth fully

fully recompenced: to which they again replied with great courtesie: and then Don Brunel went to Arsileo & embracing him said.

We now have time noble Prince to know the cause that moved you without my leave to enter in this place. I am not so weary of the last demand replied he, but that I may satisfie you now in this, though your self be well, and that the last adventure cost so dear, it were no reason to leave you in this unsatisfied.

In these and such like speeches continued they till Supper time: which come, they all did eat together, because of the wounded Princes. Here stayed they fifteen days till the Princes were well able to travel: in which time and day, Bellona taking Don Bellianis apart, she said unto him walking through their rooms. I do well know most excellent Prince, and so judge my self altogether unworthy, and it not necessary to give you counsel concerning your great actions. Yet because you are a stranger in an unknown Countrey, and in a place where every one would wish your downfal with extreamest death, and so many needsom advertisements I presume to tell you, that though faithfully in heart, and with good reason you observe, and unfainedly keep, the law and religion of your profession, yet must you conceal it, and by no means manifest it, for if in the least respect you do, it may cost you your dearest life. And moreover, after that by your invincible arm you have safely established the Princess Aurora in her usurped royalties, you must procure and endeavour to arrive at the Soldan of Babylons Court, where you must sustain your never fainting heart, with your accustomed courage: for you shall there see your self in so many great perils, that you shall a thousand times wish for death, as a remedy for them. But hereof take no thought, for they are things ordained by the supremest power, yet always bear on your shield the same device that you now have, though for her sake you shall be put in great and suffer many and tedious passions, yet shall you be thereby known, and your immortal fame blazed over the whole earths continent, which you shall still wear till I shall advertise you to the contrary: Wherewith she ended, and the Prince thus replied, I will not render to you such thanks, as this care and great courtesies deserve, for every thing I possess being at your command, it is reason you guard and protect them as your own.

Herewith

Herewith they returned to their company, and Don Brianel having seen them both together, said, I would not have you be so long together, neither that you should learn any thing, whereby you might further excel us in Fight, which if it be so, it were no reason that I whose merits be so inferiour to yours, should learn them. You may well do it (replied Don Bellianis) having in the last conflict reaped the profit, fearless of any thing that might have happened unto us. In all things you will seem to yeild unto me the vantage, answered Don Brianel, though there be nothing in me that may any way please you or the Prince Arsileo, since as you shew, you would have me had that careful fear of you, as well not knowing, as knowing you, yet do not I know why I should fear you, being accompanied with the divine beauty of this most fair and excellent Princess. You do well to jest with us all (replied she) yet 'tis no matter since your words expels what small part I have thereof, having been unable to expel the doubt you had of the Princess being here.

Don Brianel being of nature courteous and pleasant, kept them in pleasing chat, the rest of the time of their being there, which was some eight days; which expired, they being desirous to depart thence, had all Armour presented to each of them by Bellona, the richest and fairest that ever was seen: that which Don Bellianis had was of a Tawny colour, with such natural works, imbossed with pearl so bright, that they yeilded as much light as Ten burning Torches in any dark place, but chiefly the shield, having the very same image it had before, which was drawn with such curiosity of art, that if they had ever seen the substance, they would have judged it the counterfeit or portraiture of Florisbella, the Soldan of Babylons Daughter: which although the Princess Aurora knew, yet said nothing, imagining the wise woman had not without special cause set it there. About it was written the aforesaid Motto, so perfectly made with great Orient pearls, that it forced admiration in each beholder. He had also a Scabbard given him for his Sword, made of massie Gold, with Letters drawn thereon, declaring the manner of winning thereof. Arsileos were like them he had in the Cave: and Don Brianels were of divers colours, whose work

workmanſhip was worth a great Treaſury. Did not I ſay, I ſhould in all things have the advantage, that for a white Armor of no value, which I did wear in the battel, have given me now ſo rich and fair: It is not given you as a gift for your old (ſaid Arſileo) but that you ſhould pay for them. Uſe not the office of a Merchant (replyed Don Brianel) for who hath given me my armor uſeth not to ſell any. If it be ſo (ſaid Arſileo) how payed you for that which you wear. Strive not about ſo ſmall a matter (ſaid Don Bellianis) for I will pay for all, having greateſt cauſe for it. Then ſtraight were they with them armed: and taking leave of the ſage Patron; ſhe ſaid. You will by the way need Pages to attend you, therefore will I give you three of mine, and ſo preſented them three Dwarfes, ſo little, that they greatly delighted to ſee their ſmalneſs, eſpecially that of Don Bellianis, whoſe ſhortneſs reached not to the others middle, though they were wonderfull low. Where inhabit, and are ingendred ſuch gentle people as theſe? ſaid Don Brianel: I ſhould remain among them if I ſhould ſtay there to be accounted nothing, as every one of them is elſewhere. You ſhall not be accounted nothing (ſaid Don Bellianis dwarfe, called Ordino; for they would alſo ſo perſecute you, that ſeeing your bigneſs to theirs, they would (wanting ground) tread on you in ſtead of it. That were worſe than the other (replyed Don Brianel.) But leſt we further proceed in talk, it were good we ſet forward in our journey; Wherewith, with moſt kind courteſie, taking their farewell of the Lady of the cave, ſet forth of the ſame. And being without, he ſeeing the Princeſs and Lady all cloathed in moſt rich cloth of Gold, ſaid with great laughter: Let us (Sirs) make more haſte; for the deſtruction that theſe Damſels have made, will cauſe ſome unſeen wanderer demand it at our hands. But all that is left is yours (ſaid the Princeſs) therefore fear not. If it be ſo (replyed he) I have no leſs right to that which you carry: therefore were it not amiſs you give it me. The Prince Don Bellianis will not ſuffer it (anſwered ſhe) he being my guardian. For ſo much as concerneth me (ſaid the Prince) I will defend you againſt all the world. That's not material (quoth Don Brianel) for on my ſide I have the Prince Arſileo, that will ſuffer none

wronged in his presence. I cannot help you in this demand (said he) lest I should incurr such punishment, as to my ill satisfaction, and less reason I should defend.

CHAP. XI.

What happned Don Bellianis, and his companions, with Duke Alfyron the courteous, and how they proved the adventure of the unhappy bridge.

IN this order travelled these Princes, with as much pleasure as their young years could require, fearing nothing that might annoy them, taking their straight way towards a Castle, some three miles distant from Antioch, for the Princess told them it was a strong fortress, and never won by any Foreign foes, and that she and her Damsels would there remain, where also they might determine of their affairs. For which cause they had a man to guide them thither, whom they received of Bellona, which way they had not far gone, but by the same they saw toward them come the number of Twenty Thousand Knights, whereof the greatest part were very sumptuously apparelled, and many clad with rich and bright armor, insomuch that the Prince and his companions took great delight in seeing them, and Don Bellianis stepped to one of the formost, that greatly admired him being so bravely armed, and on so mighty a courser mounted, & demanded thus. I pray you in courtesie tell me, Sir Knight, to whom belongeth this fair company of Knights; he should be of no small account, that such a train maintains. They belong (Sir Knight answered he) unto Duke Alfiron the courteous, that now goeth to the City of Persepolis, because the great Sophi hath ordained great triumphs and jousts, whereunto he hath invited all the nobility of his Empire. Why prepares he so great feasts? demanded the Prince. Marry sir (replyed the other) not long since he promised to give one only daughter that he hath, to what Knight soever should Slay the Emperor of Greece, or take him prisoner: which enterprize the Prince Don Gallaneo of Antioch undertook, accompanied with many knights, who is now returned with one Cousin of his, by whom and others that with them came, the Sophi is certified, how they left the Emperor so wounded, that he could by no means scape. For which cause he hath determined to give him his Daughter in

in marriage, and therefore in these triumphs doth he feast all his Nobles. But demanded Don Bellianis, why doth the Sophi so, being uncertain of the truth? Ye thinks this sufficient (answered the Knight) that if it should otherwise be, it is thought impossible ever to effect it, for the Emperor being thereof forewarned, will with greater regard lok to himself: and besides, his Daughter will not be evil matched, he being one of the best Knights in the land; Though (to tell you truly) we be not well contented with this marriage, for that the Duke our Master was first greatly favoured of the Princess Persiana (for so is the Sophies daughter called) and seeing how he will marry her to Don Galineo, he goeth very passionate.

I commit you to God (said Don Bellianis) for you have much pleased me with your discursive news: and turning to the Prince and his Companions, told them all his talk with the Knight, and demanded of them, if they thought good to see those Jousts at Persepolis ere they passed forwarder. It will be well done (said Don Brianel) yet how shall we do, being unprovided of a Tent? What need you care for that (answered Arsileo) for it may be some will entertain us: if not, we must lie in the fields. And thus unresolved, stood still till that troop past along. At which time some of them went to the Duke, that at that time was very pensively imagining on the Princess Persiana, and said to him. See you not (Sir) yonder three Knights armed with the richest armor you have this day seen, whose gallant disposition cannot but content you, and stand in the midst of the way, seeming to demand the breaking of some Lances, and do also conduct with them about twelue Damsels, as it seems no less adorned with beauty, than they with valor. The Duke being desirous to see them, stepped forth, being armed in a tawny armor like Don Bellianis, and over the same he had a coat of a cloath of Gold, most richly embroidered with Pearls, whose brightness being overcast with the beams of the shining Sun, dazled the beholders sight. On this shield was pictured the God of Love, of whome a Knight begged mercy, he rigorously denying it. And thus went he straight to the Princes while they gazed on him, going like a valorous and well disposed Knight. The Duke no less wondring to see their gallant demeanor, and riches of ar-

more especially Don Bellianis, whose sight surprized him with sudden admiration; and being nigh them he kindly saluted them, being of nature mild, gentle and affable, for which he had obtained the name of courteous, and thus said. I am so astonished brave and valiant knights, in seeing the brave disposition of your persons, and strange manner of travelling, that I have received such content, as the like I shall never obtain; chiefly at this time, being subject to a grievous melancholick griefe. And because I suppose ye are going to the triumph at Persepolis, I intreat you to imploy me in this journey, for that you seem strangers of some remote Countrey.

And though the valour of your own persons may merit farre greater service, yet I pray deny me not this request: for I hope herein to diminish part of my boisterous & troublesome sorrow with your gentle conversation. The Princes intreating one another to answer, Don Bellianis at last replyed. The offers (most noble Duke) which by your liberal bounty we receive, are so great as we (being no other than errant knights) can no way deserve. And though we had not determined to be at those triumphs: yet to accomplish your request, willingly do condescend thereto, yielding the accountless thanks of dutiful servitors at your command; for which the Duke very joyfully entertained them, with his Ladies in his own company, and so made to Persepolis, discoursing by the way of pleasant matters, till they came within a mile of the City, hard by a great river, over which they must of necessity pass by a bridge that there was. Which the Duke seeing, said, confounded in our own discourses, sir knights, we have lost our way. Don Bellianis seeing the City, and not knowing to what end the Duke spoke it, replyed. If that be the City, I think this is the right way. 'Tis, answered the Duke. But we may not pass this bridge, for it will be mightily defended. Who be they (demanded he) that will defend it against such knights as be with us; They that do it will defend it against the whole world (answered the Duke.) For in this Kingdome are four Knights, the valiantest that on the earth do breath, all brothers. Which in one battel the Soldan had against the Soldan of Babylon, performed in it such haughty deeds, that by their proper valour the victory was obtained; which got them such honour

honour, that till this day they are reputed the ſtrongeſt knights that may be found. Whereupon the Sophi to honour them, bad them demand what they would, and he would grant it, (They anſwered) they would have nothing but this Caſtle and the Bridge, that no knights might go that way, unleſs he ſhould leave his armor and horſe, or overcoming them all in fight, paſs by. The Sophi granted it with a great living beſides, to maintain their ſtates.

So they being come to this Bridge, have brought with them two mighty and ſtrong Giants, whoſe fierceneſs no hundred knights dare abide to combat together. And have above three years defended this paſſage, & not any knight hitherto hath vanquiſhed them. For though they be ſtrong and valiant, yet in their combat they proceed not like good knights: for if it hapneth that any knight unhorſeth any of them, he muſt fouſt with the others, till he overthrow them all: but if he be by any blow himſelf overturned, he ſtraight loſeth his arms. Or if he ſhould unhorſe them all, he muſt after combat with all ſix together, being the unreaſonableſt thing that ever was heard of. And this is the cauſe why this bridge and way is no more uſed, by reaſon the miſhaps that there befall to wandring Knights, and therefore is called the Unhappy bridge. The princes greatly wondred at this adventure, yet having great deſire to prove it (Don Bellianis thus ſaid.) Truly moſt honoured Lord, we never heard of the like adventure: but if it ſo pleaſe you, we will try the favors of blind fortune therein. So will it be rather judged madneſs than valour (replied the Duke.) For it lieth not in the compaſs of one mans ſtrength to vanquiſh them: for the leaſt of them is able to withſtand the famous Emperor of Conſtantinople, that is the knight moſt feared in theſe parts, whoſe ſole name makes the Soldan himſelf tremble when he hears: and alſo dare oppoſe and confront the ſtrength of our prince, that is no leſs famoſed than he. Wherefore if you think good, let us leave this way: for I percive ſome of our company do ſee it to be dangerous. It will be a perpetual blot to our names, (replyed Don Bellianis) if through fear we ſhould not adventure our perſons herein. Therefore command them to ſtay: for I will not hence, leaving this unattempted. While they were thus talking

talking, they saw on the other side of the bridge a great number of Knights and Ladies cloathed in triumphant robes, who were coming thither to sport themselves. What fair assembly is yonder (said Don Bellianis,) It may be (said the Duke) it is the Sophi, and his daughter the Princess Persiana, that come to see if there arrive any adventure to the bridge. Although our falls were but to make them sport (said Don Bellianis) we will try our fortunes. Do as you will (said the Duke) though more willingly I could take another way. Thereupon they went straight towards that bridge, commanded all their Knights to do the like, while they proved the adventure of the Castle; which they did, yet not with any good will. The Prince Arsileo intreated Don Bellianis to grant him the first Battel. I will in no wise do it (said he) but because Don Gallaneo is yonder, put on an upper Coat over your Armor, lest you be known. I will (replyed he) but you must grant me this first Combate. In reason it belongs to me (answered Don Bellianis) seeing in this journey I am the conducter of these Ladies. We have (said Arsileo) as long accompanied them, therefore shall you not so excuse your self. Then let the battel be his (said Don Briandl) whom the Princess shall command. Strive not so about it, said the Duke; for you shall all have enough to do. Now Judge said the Princess) seeing Don Briandl by my sentence demandeth the joust, that the first be his, and the next yours, and the last be his that would be first, being reason that his strength be best tryed when the others fail. Don Bellianis grieved much because he should be last: but seeing it could no otherwise be, dissembled it, and stepping to the Duke said. I believe we shall have the bridge freer than I thought. The Duke smiled, as one that supposed their labour should be in vain. And at length arriving at the bridge, Don Briandl began to be foremost, seeing on the other side all the company come also thither, and stepping thereon, a Knight armed in an armour of divers colours, mounted on a mighty horse, approaching nigh him, said.

What madness hath possest this Knight, to seek a passage over this bridge by me defended? With mightier force was Hell defended (answered he) yet the universal Saviour of the world did overcome it: In whose name I coming, it will be no great matter for me to abate thy swelling pride. By

By thy ſpæch (replyed the Knight) thou ſæmeſt a Chriſtian. That avails not to our purpoſe (ſaid Don Brianel) therefore prepare thy ſelf. The Knight with great anger (thinking he had him in little acount) turned his horſe, and took ſo much of the bridge as would ſuffice for his courſe, while Don Brianel did the like. All the men that came with the Duke, and the people come from the City approached to ſæ the battel, and many ſaid, A very fair horſe and armour ſhall the Knight give unto him of the bridge.

At which time the knights having turned their horſes, ran one againſt the other, and met ſo furiouſly, that the Lances flew in pieces, and the Knight of the bridge went to the ground ſorely bruiſed, and Don Brianel ſo much bowed with his horſe, that he had almoſt done the like, but ſæing what company beheld him, raiſed himſelf with great courage, conſidering it was the firſt thing that the Princeſs had commanded him. A great murmur aroſe among the beholders, for they had never ſæn any of the Brethren leave the ſaddle before. Whereupon the other three Knights, and the two Giants being armed, iſſued all mounted on great and luſty horſes, who when they ſaw their brother on the ground, one of them made towards Don Brianel, that already had taken a Lance from his Dwarfſe. The Princeſs Perſiana, that was she on the other ſide of the bridge, and Don Gallaneo already called her Spouſe, with the Spohi his father in law, ſaid to Don Gallaneo, I have not ſæn gallanter Knights than thoſe on the further ſide, eſpecially yon four (pointing to the two Princes, the Duke, and he that jouſted on the bridge) and greatly do deſire to know who they be. It is no other than the Duke Alfinon (replyed Don Gallaneo) for I heard he ſlept not far hence this laſt night. The Princeſs Perſiana hearing the Duke named, fetcht a dæp ſigh, as one that loved him within the ſecret of her heart, but for fears to diſpleaſe her father, durſt ſay nothing, yet thought ſhe by the richneſs of his armor, it ſhould be he, ſtood and viewed him very attentively, and ſæing how the enraged Knights with puiſſant force encountred each other in ſuch ſort, that their Lances brake in a thouſand ſhivers, and mæting with their horſes, ſhields and helms, both fell to the ground: but if Don Brianels horſe had bæn ſo good as his adverſaries, he had

paſſed

passed without a fall, which he had scant done, when the men of the castle closed to unarm him. But the Prince Arsileo desirous to avoid it, with great choler entred the bridge: so did another of the adverse part, with such swiftnes, as doth an arrow shot from a bow fly through the Air, or a Thunderbolt breaking from some swelling cloud, and with such might encountred on the bridge, that the Knight of the Castle was overthrown, with a piece of the lance sticking in his body. If it proceeds as it begins (said the Duke) we shall freely pass. So shall it be (answered Don Bellianis) for with your auspicious favor they may be brought to our wished end. The Sophi was astonished at the strong incounters of the knight, and speaking to Don Gallaneo said. I never thought there could be better Knights than those of the bridge, but now I see what advantage those Knights have over them. Wonder not thereat (said Don Gallaneo) for in the battel we had with the Emperor, there was in his aid one novel Knight, whom he there knighted, that performed such haughty deeds of arms, that neither Hector nor Achilles ever did the like. For believe me, he no more esteemed to be assaulted by four or by two Giants, than with one Knight, and with his own hands in the battel he slew above twelve Giants, and fifty Knights of mine. But as for the Emperor, I have told you what hapned me with him in the Castle, he being unarm'd: so that you need not wonder what these do, though any of them do end this adventure, which I cannot believe: and if they do, I will acknowledge it the greatest act that ever I heard of, by reason their sword-fighting will be so unequal. Which having said, the eldest and the greatest of the brethren came against Arsileo, intending to revenge his brothers death, whose incounters were so furious, that their Lances were made in little pieces: and in such sort met with their bodies, that the Knight of the Castle was overthrown with a great wound on his side. And Arsileos horse with the stronge stroke recoyled back three or four paces, that at last unable to stay him, with admirable lightnes, he leapt from his back, being a little wounded on the breast. The servants of the Castle went to him, to do as they would have done with Don Brianel: but the first that arrived, for his boldnes lost his head: For Arsileo thinking he should not be

judged

judged overthrown, laid hands on his sword to defend himself, wherewith he would have made them know, his valour extended farther than thitherto he had shown. But the two brothers that Don Brianel had unhorsed arrived with their drawn swords, the like did the Giants. And on the other side Don Bellianis and the Duke did so, that in short time among them all, there began a terrible and fearful battel, for all the Dukes Knights would pass over the Bridge. But the Sophy, the Princess Persiana, and Don Gallaneo went and parted them, and demanded the cause why they were so mingled together, and did not proceed with their combat as they had begun: which either they should do or let them pass; We are contented to do either (said Don Bellianis) but this Knight fell not, seeing by anothers strength he left not the saddle, and therefore ought not to lose his horse until the Jousts be ended. He may no more mount (said they.) Who shall judge it (demanded Don Bellianis?) We need no judge (said they) for it is our custome; but if any must be, let it be the Souldan (our Lord) here present. Be it so, (said the Duke.) Then (said the Sophy) I award, that since the Knight was not by another unhorsed, he lose not his horse nor armour but that he be vanquished, seeing he forsook his horse; so that he may joust no more.

Great profit do they get by this sentence (said a proud Knight) that on the Souldan attended, and was a near Allye to the Giants that defended the Bridge. It is well judged (said Don Bellianis:) and believe me, had not the Souldan done it, no less wrong received we than they.

But what art thou that shouldst not a little count thy self, being more prouder than valiant, to speak against the Souldan thy Lords judgement?

The Knight inraged with desire to revenge those words, answered. Let us set aside the Souldans judgement as a matter impertinent to us: but if thou wilt, upon whether of the Knights be overcome, accept this my gage, I give it to thee.

I accept it (answered Don Bellianis) on condition we may not pass the bridge, unless by force we do it. You defer it too long (said the Knight) and our fight will be void if you mean to win the bridge by strength; for these Knights earnestly desire your

armour, being so rich. But I give thée leave to help them (answered Don Bellianis) whereby thou shalt sée how little I account what thou so much estéemest.

All the beholders admired him, to sée with what courage he spake: but chiefly the Princess Perliana that going to the Duke Alfiron (whom she did not know) being among the Knights, and not knowing what end that enterprize would have, did not discover himself, and said, I pray thée (good Knight) tell me, who be these Knights; for I greatly desire to know it. The Duke softly, that none might hear, answered.

No marvel (most beauteous Princess) and Lady of my heart, you at this time know me not, having imployed my service in your behalf to so little regard: But if (dear Lady) you had determined I should by your cruelty die, why did you not command me to be my own Executioner, and not permit my eyes to sée the sight of my living death? The Princess by his speech, straight knew him, whereupon, for very grief her eyes overflowed with pearled tears: but dissembling, lest it should be discerned, replyed:

The Gods knew (great Duke) my grief for this marriage my Father intends, is no less than yours, and therefore must we perforce have patience.

The Duke would have answered her, but that he perceived Don Bellianis had ended the accepting of the battel against the proud Knight, and that they of the Bridge had granted them the combat therein, conditionally that if Don Bellianis were overcome, his horse and armor should be theirs: who greatly grieved for their brothers death, and more that they could not be revenged on him that had slain him.

CHAP. XII.

What happened *Don Bellianis* in the Battel with the Knights of the Bridge.

DOn Bellianis inflamed with anger against the Knight, withdrew himself, to whom the Princess Aurora thus said. As much as other Knights do shun the most dangerous fights, even so much, and more do you seek them. I can do no less (replyed he.) At this time arrived the Duke, having left

left the Princess, and said to him: It were good you encourage your self Sir Knight; for you have a very mighty adversary. All his strength will scant suffice him (said the Princess Aurora) though he be never so valiant. Which words the Duke did so little set by at the first, seeing the Knights so well confirmed them by their haughty Exploits.

Don Bellianis with the enraged choler he had conceived, opposed himself against the Knights that also came towards him, who very strongly in the middle of his Shield made his Encounter, yet not hurting him at all, brake his Lance, not moving him in his saddle; for the impenetrable virtue of the Shield retorted back the furious Iron.

Don Bellianis with the great desire he had to hit him, mist his Encounter, so that their horses passed on their course with admirable fury. The great ire the Prince hereat conceived by missing his encounter, is not described for want of skill, but very furiously turned upon the Knight, that did the like, and judging it cowardize, having mist his encounter and lost his Lance, to draw his Sword against so vile and insolent a man, went toward him, receiving a most heavy blow upon his helmet, and with incredible swiftness running at him snatcht him 'twixt his strong arms, and as he were a little child pluckt him from his saddle, and impatiently governed by his present fury, stept to the bridge side, and over it tumbled him down into the river, where through the weight of his armour he was straight overwhelmed, leaving the beholders so amazed at the deed that the Soldan cryed out: Oh immortal Gods, what mighty strength is this in one Knight? It is wonderful great (said Don Gallaneo) that was something moved seeing him; and more circumspectly looking on him, thought that was the device of the novel Knight at Constantinople: yet he doubted it, being so far distant thence, not imagining he would come hither, by reason of the difference of religion. Yet seeing those Ladies there, did greatly suspect it. And again turning his eyes towards him he saw one of the Knights of the Bridge pricked forward against him. Don Bellianis that also went to meet him with a Lance, although the Duke called to him to take his, said, I have no need thereof, having imployed mine own so ill: but meeting the Knight in the

middle of the bridge was forced to lose his stirrop by the incounter, and meeting with horses, shields, and bodies. the Knight fell down bruised, with his head all battered Don Bellianis horse with the shock rested immovable, till with his spurs he made him like a whirlwind fly, even to the place where the Soldan and his company were, that firmly had their gazing eyes fixed on him. The Sophi seeing one of the Giants coming against him, said, Take a Lance (sir Knight) for you will greatly need it in this Joust prepared for you. It is my Countreys custome (most excellent Lord) that the Knight which in jousting before a King or Emperour, loseth his encounter, through the little valour of his worth, may not until he have ended the battel take another, which makes me now against my necessity ride without it: and so prancing and with great courage managing his Horse, he spur'd against the Giant who not minding to leave his lance, though he saw the Prince without any, prickt against him, but he drawing his sword before they met, cut it in two, and stepping aside with his horse, let him pass in such an amazement, that missing whereon to hit and stay himself, ran headlong forwards, and at last Horse and all tumbled down, the Giant resting sore battered with the terrible fall: and the Prince seeing it, set himself in his place expecting the rest of his Adversaries: against whom came the Knight that first jousted with Don Brianel, and staying for him, at the instant he would encounter him with his Lance, leapt aside with his Horse, making him lose his stroke, and with great fury turning upon him, snatcht his Lance out of his hands, and therewith with one blow feld him to the earth, and returning to his place, brandished it with great joy. The lokers on had almost perswaded themselves to dream with the sight of such admirable Exploits. The Duke was so ravished with gladness, that he knew not what to say, to whom the Princess Aurora spake. What think you (Sir) of the Knight in the tawny Armour? What may I think or say? (said he) but that in no time or age of men, were ever like heroick actions performed: and if he can so well use his Sword, as he can his Lance mounted on his Courser, I doubt not but without impediment, we shall pass the bridge. Straight shall you be assured thereof (said she:) And so brake off their talk; for Don Bellianis with the Spear he had

taken

taken from the Knight oppoſed himſelf againſt that mighty Giant, that blaſpheming old Mahomet, came againſt him with ſuch fierceneſs, that foaming like a Boar, and guided with a helliſh rage moſt thick ſmoak iſſued from the Viſor of his Helm, and in the middle of the ſpacious Bridge encountred, that the Giant brake his Lance on Don Bellianis Shield; which ſliding on it made him a great wound, whence iſſued much blood. The Prince ſtruck in ſuch manner, that piercing his Shield and Armour, mightily wounded him on the breaſt: and both meeting with their Horſes, the Giant meaſured his length on the earth, & the Princes Horſe ſet both his knees on the ground, wherewith he reſted ſo amazed, that he had not the remembrance to ſpur him. Whereat the Prince Arſileo that ſaw him in ſuch a trance, and thinking him wounded to the death, would have helped him if the Duke had not bid him ſtand ſtill to ſee what the Knights would do; who greatly abaſht at their unhappy ſucceſs, did together go all againſt him: but before they arrived the Prince had recovered himſelf, and very cholerick through that accident ſtraight diſmounted, and embracing his Shield, drew his Sword with ſuch fury, and little fear, as if he had but to do with one Knight. The Knight is not in his wits (ſaid the Sophi) to leave his horſe in ſuch a time, having to do with ſo hardy Knights, who encompaſſing him, did beſtow ſuch mighty blows, as might diſſolve the limping Gods black ſteeled forge. The Giants being ſomewhat ſlow in arriving by reaſon of their boyſterouſneſs, hoiſted up their ſlicing Battel-axes, thinking to end the battel with their firſt blows: but the diſcreet Prince knowing how grievous thoſe ſtrokes were to ſuffer, ſtept aſide that both alighted in vain, and reached one of them ſuch a blow on the leg, that he cut it quite in ſunder: who not able to ſuſtain himſelf thereon, fell down, yet was he ſtruck in ſuch manner, that he was wounded in two places, while he laid the other Giant on the head, that the blood ran down his eyes, and defending himſelf with his Shield from the Knights blows, ſtruck him on the arm that held the Axe, that both fell together for company, and the Giant going to take that with the other hand, could not through the exceſſive pain of the

fall

fall by the encounter: and again he was so mightily wounded on the head that he tumbled at his feet: and because he had put him in such trouble, sought all means to cut off his head, but the Knights laid on him as did the Cyclops, when at Venus request by Vulcans command they forged Æneas armor in the very burning Ætna mount, which forced him to sustain himself on the ground with his hand, but he redoubling his force, with enraged valiancy, seeing the Giants troubled him no more, turned upon the three brethren, and wounded one of them which most vexed him on the head, that he cleaved it in two, the others embraced him, thinking to overturn him, but they might as well tell the Stars of Heaven, or with casting water fill the wide vast Ocean Sea. For the Prince being the strongest Knight of forces in the world, that few or no Giants could equal him therein, so bravely held one betwæn his arms, that he thrust the pieces of his armor into his flesh, that the crimson blood gusht from his veins exceeding fast. And seeing that himself lost no small quantity, procured to shorten the fight lest he might therein faint, and so made them think (drawing them both to the Bridge side) that he would throw them into the river; which they perceiving, and the extream state they were brought to, demanded of him mercy for their lost lives. At which instant arrived the Sophi, and said; Seeing they can no longer defend themselves (sir Knight) be satisfied with what you have done. For which your victorious name shall ever be eterniz'd throughout the spacious continent of this earthly ball, having ended the greatest Adventure, that ever Knight attempted. I am content to obey your command (most excellent Lord) answered the Prince, on this condition, that they no more maintain this custom. That cannot they do (replied the Sophi) for it was their own agreement. Then the Prince leaving the Knights, gave God thanks that so delivered him from that great danger which they thought he did to their Gods. The Princes Arsileo, and Don Brianel, whose armor was taken away (with the hope to do the like by them all) with the Duke Alfiron, and the Princess, went and embraced him with such love, as if he had revived from death to life. And the Duke was somewhat abashed of the little confidence he had shewen of them.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

How the Knights were received of the *Soldan* of *Persia*: and their conference with the Princess *Persiana*.

The Princess Persiana and Don Gallaneo, being desirous to speak with the Duke Alfiron, having understood by some of the Knights that he was there, were going to him, but he alighting from his horse, went to kiss the Sophi's hands, and humbled himself before him, whom the Sophi but then seeing, imbraced, and raising him from the ground, said. I am glad, Duke, to see you come to honour our triumphs, chiefly bringing to our Court such Knights as these, especially he in the tawny armor, whom I would have you tell me what they be, assuring you the world cannot afford his like, and I rest so amazed, that I know not if any humane strength be able to accomplish what he hath. All the rest of his company affirmed it, scarce believing what their own eyes had seen: and the Duke answered. It was you (my gracious Lord) whom I would intreat to demand it of them; for though they came in my company, it is but very little since I met them, and if they do not declare it to you, I doubt they will not do it to any other. Speak to the Princess, Duke, said the Sophi, while I talk with the Knights, and going a little further, said to Don Bellianis that was mounting on the Giants horse with whom he first jousted, whose like for bigness, strength and well body the whole Persian Empire did not then contain: but perceiving the Sophi came towards him, would not mount, but as he was on foot humbled himself to kiss his Royal hands. The Sophi holding him with one hand because he should not kneel, with the other dismounted, and imbracing him with great affection, said. There is no reason Sir Knight, why you should kneel to any, deserving for your valour and incomparable bounty the same duty of every one. But for one only thing must I needs now intreat you, which I am sure you will not deny me, judging your courtesie no less than your haughty courage, of which all such Knights as you should as much prize themselves, as of their proper valour, what thing before I express it will therefore bind you by your promise. Tell me (most mighty Lord) answered Don Bellianis, what you will command me: for barbarous and uncivil

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were he that should deny so great a Lord any thing, in the highest degree appertaining to your Royal Service; although a Knight of such small consequence as I, less than your behest should satisfie. Hereupon the Duke, Don Gallaneo and Princess Persiana, after their greetings, came thither to know the conference betwæn him and the Knight: so did the Princess Aurora and the rest of the company, who were entertained with such courtesie, as if they were known to be the greatest Peers of the World. At length the Princess Persiana thus said to the Princess Aurora. I do intreat you (fair Lady) lest we should derogate from the honour by your exteriour shew and the valour of your attendant Knights you seem to deserve, you would manifest the state and royalty of your descent; for although you desire to conceal it, yet your worthiness will shine from the dignity of your birth. She humbling her self, said, I rather desire (most excellent Princess) you should still conceive that opinion of me (though undeserved;) for after you should know me, my small deserts will then lose the favours you now shew me: for the meanels of my state is such, that it doth not merit the fruition of these favours. Seeing you will have it so, I will no longer importune you (replyed the beauteous Persiana) so evidently telling me, we merit not to know you, save only by your outward signs. But setting aside the worthiness of your person, that well deserveth we should all obey you, let me then receive the favour, that you would vouchsafe to lodge within the Soldan my Fathers Pallace. We may say nor do any thing herein (said Arsileo) more than the Knight in the tawny armor will command, to whom all obedience is due. May then (said the Soldan) if we list to know it, we shall easily know it by force of arms, but seeing he hath promised me a boon, this shall be it (said he) turning to Don Bellianis, that you all take off your Helms, and that we may know your Names. Don Bellianis stood somewhat pensive, not knowing what to answer, yet thinking that the longer he kept silence they would the more suspect, he at last thus replyed. Truly excellent Lord, you have demanded me a thing that by my will I never would discover, but seeing I can do no less, there is no reason I should deny it, & therefore will declare it with license of this my company. We

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will allow whatsoever you shall do, said they. The Princess Aurora was at this time in great fear lest they should be known, thinking that Don Gallaneo had seen them in the Castle when Don Brianel was carried thither, but they deceived themselves for he had not seen them but armed when he was there taken, Don Bellianis replying to the Soldan, said, You shall know (my good Lord) I am called the Knight of the golden Image, because I bear it on my shield, and I assure you at this present I have no other name, neither may I have it, till I be commanded the contrary. This my companion, pointing to Don Brianel, nominated the venturous Knight, and this other is the Prince Arsileo, if ever you heard him named before, Prince and sole Heir of the Kingdom of Rasia. This Lady whom we accompany, is the King of Carcasius daughter, with whom through a certain adventure we were all going to the King her Fathers Court. This is all, most noble Lord, what in this case I can declare, protesting by the faith of a Knight, I may not more discover; for I my self do not know it. You have done with me (replied the Soldan) although I desired larger information, and seeing there remains no more to do, I pray you unlace your helms, that my desire may be further satisfied. Arsileo and Don Brianel straightway obeyed, being very glad to hear how well Don Bellianis had answered: which done, they all highly commended them for their brave disposition. The Princess Aurora being sorrowful not knowing what reply Don Bellianis would make, with great joy stepped unto him, and unlaced his helm: whose fair complexion with the gallant constitution of his well knit members, and strength of body was highly admired, having his hair like threads of massy gold, disheveled hanging on his shoulders. The sight of this his rare favour, with his haughty exploits in arms, made them amazedly think him the offspring of the mighty God of war, judging it impossible that any mortal creature should possess two such extreams, wherein he surpassed all in the compass of the earth. He was of stature higher than any Knight of that age, his hands long and sinewy, betokening his excessive strength, his shoulders big and large, whose breadth might mainly bear the puissant burthen of old Atlas forces. His face whiter than the purest Alabaster, commixt with the roseate colour of a natural

ted. Therein was placed his eagle penetrating instrument of sight, as bright as the resplendent rays of the meridian Sun: and to conclude, there was none afflicted with black heart-oppressing melancholy, but in examining his perfections, would, on a sudden banish that enemy to quiet pleasure. He had moreover a certain manner of mild gravity, that with it he drew unto him the love of the admirers: for it being with anger moved, there could be no countenance more stern than his; yet he so refrained himself by forcing it from him, that straight he would expel it. He was a great maintainer and lover of justice, that if any did commit a fault, or exceed, he himself would see him punished. None in his time could equal him in forces. His speech was rare, but wise, and never spake but premeditated upon occasion. When the Soldan saw such accomplished perfections and compleat valor in one Knight, he again embraced him, conceiving so great pleasure, that had not the marriage of his daughter been so forward, he would willingly without further knowledg what he was, given her him for his wife, and at last he brake their silence with these words: Most glorious Knight, I impute it no fault in you, in being so unwilling to discover unto us your rare parts, which only to the immortal Gods, as things altogether proper and appertaining to themselves do belong, to whom I render recountless thanks, that in my time they have vouchsafed to send so great a wonder among us in this our age. At that time Don Bellianis would have kissed his hands to which he not consenting, arrived the Princess Persiana with Don Gallaneo, leading with them the Princess Aurora. Whereupon the Soldan and the Knights mounted on their horses, and the Ladies on their Palfreys, and Don Bellianis having his wounds first dressed by the Damosels, who also did the like to the Knights of the Bridge, they took their way to Persepolis. The Dukes train was exceeding merry, to have in their company so famous Knights for those triumphs: Don Brianel, that was called the adventurous Knight, stepped to the beauteous Persiana, and as one that in Courtly courtesie, and pleasant discourses was inferior to none, said to her: Seeing fair Princess, my name is not opposite against any favour I may receive, I beseech you make me thereby assured firm against all changes of all revolving chance: in sign whereof, grace me by your grant, with

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the leading of your Palfrey by the reins, whereby I may with the fruition of your divine company, injoy all that I may desire, which is to rest sole yours for ever, since yonder Knight (meaning Don Gallaneo) hath taken on him my office with the Princess my Lady. This he said because Don Gallaneo did lead the Princess Aurora's palfrey, which though she suffered, was to dissemble that she knew him not, rather desiring his death, than at his hands any such favour. The like wish wished the Duke Alfiron. The Princess Persiana, no less gallant in talk, than rareness of beauty, replyed:

I would not (sir Knight) that about your service, the Princess your Lady and I should jar: but seeing she doth accept a stranger for her service, she shall receive the guerdon of her change: and therewith she gave him the reins, which he gladly took, to whom the Princess Aurora said, I know not sir adventurous Knight, wherein I have so much discontented you, that you should so soon drown me in oblivion: but if it were in commanding you to prove the adventure of the bridge, henceforth will I be more considerate, and so you shall be less grieved; yet notwithstanding all things have so well befallen you that you have no cause of grievance. True, said he, if the Prince Arsileo had not got more by that proof than I. What have I obtained more? demanded Arsileo. The commandement of my Lady the Princess (said he) besides the horse you have under you. So have you got your armour which you had lost (answered Arsileo) for which you are beholding to the Knight of the goldem Image. I have no reason to thank him for it (replied he) for he did it more to keep his own that are so excellent, than because I should not lose mine. Then were it good, said Don Bellianis, since you will not thank me for them, that you restore them back to me. We shall not so soon end this quarrel as you did the other (replyed Don Brianel) for the Knights loking for yours, would to have them, willingly let me have mine. Let this pass (said Don Gallaneo) for had you lost these your gallant dispositions you would have gotten others. In this manner at length they arrived at the City, even at the days departing, giving place unto the nighly glistering stars twinkling in the firmament, where they found the people attending for their coming with lights and torches, who in troops

filled up the ſtreets, that they had no way to paſs; for the news being ſpread, that one Knight had vanquiſhed the keepers of the unhappy bridge, they all flocked to ſee him, as a wonder, demanding one of another which was he, never enough ſatisfied with his ſight, that all this while talked with Don Gallaneo, till they all came to the Pallace gate, where they alighted. The beauteous Perſiana was diſmounted by Don Bellianis, that ſaid to Don Brinel: I have at this time (Sir Adventurous Knight) deceived you of the reward of your labour, having on ſot obtained more than you, in all this journey. You are all againſt me (replied he) but I may have a time to cry quittance with you for it. Don Gallaneo taking the Princeſs Aurora in his arms, they all entred the royal Hall, whence all their company departed. The Soldan importuned the three Knights to ſtay within the Palace, which he could not obtain. For they anſwered they would in no wiſe leave the Duke, till the triumphs were ended: ſo ſaid the Princeſs Aurora, that never would diſaſſociate her Knights; and ſo with leave of the Soldan and his daughter, they alſo departed.

Well did Don Bellianis note when they were taking their leave, how the Duke Alfiron ſhewed no good will towards Gallaneo, wherefore he was deſirous to be certified thereof: and being come to the Dukes palace, that was one of the beſt and greateſt in the City, Don Bellianis would not ſtay for ſupper: but finding himſelf weak through the much blood he had loſt, caſt himſelf on a bed that was made for him, where his Damoſels did again dreſs his wounds, while the Duke and the reſt ſate to ſupper: where they were ſo well ſerved, as they had been in Conſtantinople, and after went to viſit Don Bellianis, whence departing, they went to repoſe their wearied bodies.

CHAP. XIII.

The conference between the Princeſs *Perſiana*, and the Duke *Alfiron*, with the Knight of the Golden Image.

The next morning ſcarce had the Sun mounted on his fiery wain, to make his ordred courſe about the world, but the Duke Alfiron went to viſit the Knight of the golden Image, for by no other name would he be known to them, unleſs it were

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to the Princes and Ladies: and entring his chamber, he found him rising, though his wounds were great. The Duke with a kind congey gave him the good morrow, and said, Trouble not your self to rise, Sir Knight, for your wounds may put you in great pain. Thinking you went to the Tourney (answered the Prince) I would make me ready. What shall we do there to day, replyed the Duke? but I believe if the Soldan knew you were so weak he would come to visit you. Then were it not amiss (said the Prince) to save him that labour.

With this entred the Ladies also to visit him, bidding him in no case to rise till they further advised him: wherewith he lay still: & so the Ladies left him with the Duke. But he having great desire to be avenged on Don Gallaneo, by reason of the promise he had made his father, and perceiving the Duke had like intent, and desiring to know it, said to him: Tell me Sir, which of all those Knights was the Prince Don Gallaneo of Antioch? That was he (replied the Duke) that led the Princes Aurora by the reins of her palfrey, born to rob me of my earthly joys. What is the cause thereof, demanded he? for so great a Lord as you should easily be revenged on any person whatsoever, being moved thereto. This is not the thing that may remedy my grief (said the Duke.) Yet I pray you let me know it (said Don Bellianis.) Then thus began the Duke: I was a long time captivated in the love of the beauteous Princes Persiana, and of her so highly favoured, that with little labour I might have obtained her for my wife, if my revolting fates had not opposed themselves against my happiness: and so declared to him the whole process of his love, with such sorrow, that Don Bellianis could not restrain his tears, taking great compassion on him, though glad in that this might be a means to effect his own intent, and thus answered. Do not think your matter so hapless, but imagine you may by some means attain the Princes Persiana to your wife. I cannot perswade my self (replied the Duke) there may be any remedy for my grief. For to morrow after dinner the Jousts begin, and the same morning the Princes is married to Don Gallaneo, whereby I see no hope but death for anchorage and to end all my pains, or to deprive my life of my vital senses, before my eyes do view it. Do not afflict your soul (said Don Bellianis)

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for I have thought upon a mean which if you agree thereto, is, that to morrow we meet at the Tourny, where if Don Gallaneo (thinking himself the best Knight within this Court) doth enter, there also I mean to be in an unknown armor, and meeting with him will disappoint him of his new betrothed love. For I have no less desire than you to send him out of the world, And to the end with more secresie we may do it, you shall give out I am so sore wounded that I rest unable to rise, and so Don Gallaneo shall not scape my hands, and your intent shall be at full accomplished. If this fail, you have such Knights, that with them maugre all the Court, I will conduct her where you will, The Duke hearing this knew not where he was, with joy, and imbracing him, said, Not without great cause (renoumed Knight of the golden Image) did I from the first hour I saw you, comprize such love of you, and was so suddenly affected, as the man in whom might consist the remedy of my torments, although we know not fully how we shall accomplish it, by reason at this present there is above 50000 Knights in the Court that I doubt we shall not so easily scape with our lives, for all I little regard my own. Think not so much on the end (replyed Don Bellianis) if you see the matter happily begun, for there is nothing so surely grounded, but the beginning will require great labour, especially such enterprises as these. Wherefore my opinion is, seeing our time is so short, that you send half of your men to attend our coming in the way we must take, some ten miles hence, taking with them double horsing that when we arrive with ours tired, and being there forced to fight, we may find fresh horses, and this done a thousand chosen men will serve to fetch her hence, so that they perfectly know the way. The Duke liked well of this counsel: where they broke off, being advertised how the Soldan and the Princess Persiana, with all the chief nobility (except Don Gallaneo) that remained about another matter, which shall be declared, came to visit him; wherefore the Duke hearing it, went to meet him, yet for all his hast he found him coming up the stairs talking with the Princes Arsileo, Don Brianel and Aurora that went forth to receive them: who when they saw the Duke go toward them, the Princess Persiana said, I fear, (great Duke) you are already assured of the Victory of the Jousts, being in company

pany of such valiant Knights, which makes you thus keep your Chamber at this time a day, notwithstanding I can tell you, you have many adversaries: therefore advise your self and look well what you have to do, and must in your own defence perform. The Duke knæling before her, demanded her beauteous hands to kiss them for the favour she did him by her good counsel, and that none might hear, replyed, If your divine favour, most excellent Lady doth not forsake me, I may securely rest fearless of all dangers: but I doubt I shall with your absence remain altogether unable thereto, having lost the fruition of your divine favour possessed by a stranger in my sight. The Princess made him rise, and that she might more at her pleasure talk with him, took him by hand, and that every one might hear, said, Seeing you have thus long been idle, I mean now to task you for your labour; for you shall be this day my Guardian for that the adventurous Knight may not be both the Princesses and mine, & therefore will I renounce him, having so soon forgotten me. Then belike my self, being desirous (said Don Brianel) to obtain both your favours, must now fear to lose all: yet am I content that my Lord the Duke may have the inheritance of my place. Thus chatting they arrived at Don Bellianis lodging who would have risen to receive them, but the Soldan would not suffer it: and going to his bed side, demanded how he felt himself: whereunto he replyed, I cannot but do well (most dread Lord,) resting so bound to your imperial Majesty, that I know not how I may acknowledg satisfaction for the least of these your royal favours which forceth me in no less pain, than the grief of my late received wounds. While they were all earnestly talking, the Princess Persiana, said to the Duke, What intend you to do again to morrows Tournament, or will you not be there? I will do no more (said he) than you will command me; for I come with no other intent. Then she said, seeing you leave it to my dispose, I think because the Knight of the golden Image, by reason of his wounds cannot be there, that you fail not; for you shall reap greater favour at my hands than Don Gallaneo: in token whereof I present you this Flag, and set it on the top of your Crest, which with my hands I wrought, unknown to any; which that none did see she took it out of her

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pocket, and gave it him. The Duke received it with wonderful content and kist her hand, resting the joyfullest man alive. Think not much of that I do, for my father forceth it, and I would put my self in danger to avoid it: and I have greatly rejoyced that you brought with you such valiant warriors, as at the unhappy bridge I saw. For if the Knight of the golden Image were not as he is, I would have intreated him to procure to dissolve this Match, done contrary to my hearts intent. He and I have conferred about this matter (said the Duke) yet speak you with him about it, that he may know this to be with your consent; whereupon she went to his beds side, while the Soldan talked apart with Arsileo whom he highly estæmed, knowing him to be as great a Prince as Don Bellianis had said. The Princess Persiana seeing so good occasion, demanded how he felt himself with his great wounds, as much grieving for them as though he were the Prince her brother, and the more, being in a time when she so much needed the help of his unconquerable strength to the subverting of her enemies: whereto he answered; I do feel my self (most excellent Princess) very well, especially to accomplish any thing appertaining to your high service; wherefore assuredly command and imploy me any way wherein my worthiness may prevail for your behoof. It is no small promise (replied she) you offer me; for as I do greatly need it, so shall I have cause to employ the greatest part of your valour. And therefore (most glorious Knight) know, as you already have understood of the Duke, that the Soldan my father hath determined to marry me to the Prince Don Gallaneo; which doth so torment my passion broken heart, that I here vow, if all other means of my desired remedy do fail me, my proper hand shall finish the tragick scene of my afflicted life, ere I will consent to this unfortunate wedding: and though many Nobles have solicited my father to the contrary, yet will he not be satisfied, answering them words unbeseeming both his Majesty and their Estates. Wherefore if I have cause so to complain of my soul consuming griefs (if ever you felt the like) you may easily judge. And to conclude, I was determined to marry none but the Duke Alfiron the Courteous. For when I saw your high admired deeds in the battel, I then assured my self of help. But now through your grievous wounds

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it hath since so increased, that had I not so discovered my discontent unto you, I had to morrow wedded me to death, rather than to him I so abhor. Therefore this only I intreat you, that commiserating the state of me the most unhappiest Princess living, you would procure some redress to terminate my woes, that I may not fall into his hands whom mortally I hate, I mean Don Gallaneo, wherein you shall commit no error against my father, whose decaying honour with his life will be augmented by his death. For Don Gallaneo is not the man that merits his daughter, being a Knight of the least faith at this time living. And I cannot be perswaded that so famous and glorious a Prince as the Emperor of Greece, could by him be assaulted, unless it were with treason and such like. And the greatest corrosive to my heart is, I cannot in some night steal out of the Palace, and so depart with the Duke whersoever he would convey me: which my father suspecting keepeth me with a Guard. Thus have I (sir Knight) disclosed the tenor of my griefs, beseeching you, that if any hope hang in the angry skies for my release, you would let me know it; assuring your self, I will refuse no danger, and will undergo all perils, accounting them as greatest pleasures, so thereby I may frustrate this detested match. Don Bellianis all this while rested much amazed to see how passionately the Princess grieved, and with what confidence she had manifested unto him her mind: and without longer deliberating on the matter, as if he had resolved thereon, with consent of his companion, replyed; great is the Pleasure I have received (most excellent Princess) with the knowledge of this your resolve, having thereon ere this conferred with the Duke, and so I only expected this your high command, and also hoping you will bind me to your perpetual observation by your visitation, I remained thus in bed, by which occasion I more conveniently might know the resolution of your mind, which now being assured of, you shall need do no more, than commit the execution of all unto my charge, your self seeming to know nothing: for I protest and promise you, never more after to put on armor, if this marriage be effected with Don Gallaneo. And doubt not but with the help of the immortal Gods, it shall be as I say: but lest we should force suspicion by our long discourse, I will not

any longer stay you. With which conclusion she rested the contentedst Lady in the world, seeing how well those affairs would proceed according to her desire, only for that the Knight of the golden Image had so confidently undertaken so weighty a charge. And so after some ceremonies between them, she fell in discourse with the other Knights and Ladies, while the Soldan was taking his leave of Don Bellianis and the Princess Aurora; and the like did his daughter. Which done and both parties resting content, they departed toward the Pallace, with them the Princes Arsileo, and Don Brianel, with the Duke, who leaving them there, returned to their Lodgings to order their determined purposes: whereupon they straight commanded that two thousand Knights should that night depart, and attend their coming to Diana's grove. And themselves prepared how and in what manner they would meet in the Tourny the ensuing day, and so expected the next morrow with hope to execute their determination.

CHAP. XV.

What conference passed between the Prince Don Gallaneo, and his Cousin Don Galseo the unknown: and how they resolved to kill the Knight of the golden Image and his Companions.

MAny and great were the thoughts that troubled Don Gallaneo, seeing that the Knight of the Golden Image had ended the Adventure of the Bridge, which made him imagine he should know him by comparing the haughty deeds he then had done in that battel, to equal those he saw him do in the conflict at Constantinople, where he aided the Emperor Don Bellaneo: wherefore taking apart his cousin Don Galseo the unknown, brake into these speeches: I cannot tell (good cousin) whether you have marked what I have, and known that which grieves me to the heart: yet notwithstanding, know for certainty, and I am perswaded that the Knight of the golden Image is he that fought against us at Constantinople, in the battel of the Emperour Don Bellaneo: whom if he, then comes he only to procure our utter overthrow, by untimely death. For though the Emperor should be dead, yet I so fear them, that until I have the Princess in my power, I shall not rest, through extremity of passions, of

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those disturbing thoughts which have so bereft me of my senses, that I know not what course to take: Don Galfeo hereat amazed, did reply. Either I have been blind, or not my self, in not noting those Knights as you have: yet assure your self (for so do I) that the Emperour is himself come disguised with them. For in the conflict with him, there was but two, & now there is three, which doth confirm it, else could no Knights in the world perform such admirable deeds against the Knights of the bridge, but the Emperor. Therefore determine what you will have done with them, since we have them at our pleasure in the Dukes Pallace. None of them is the Emperor, for I know him very well (said Don Gallaneo.) But know (I think it best) to morrow when the jousts begin, the Duke being general of the adventurers, and I of the Courtiers, you shall take five hundred chosen Knights, and with them march to the Dukes lodging, which you shall find without any guard; There go up to the Chamber the Knight lieth in sore wounded, where you may easily deprive him of his life, and the like will I do by his companions in the field. All this approved, Don Galfeo being as false a traitor as his cousin; and that night they prepared those men they thought meet for that Enterprize, determining to put the Princess to death before their malice were known.

CHAP. XXVI.

How the Tourney began: and in what danger the Adventurous Knight and Arsileo were put by Don Gallaneo's Knights.

NO sooner had the splendent Sunne, expelling the obscure darknes from the glomy skies, clearing the morn with his bright light, on that in every place so celebrated day of S. John, but with unspeakable and long hoped joys, there began in the City of Persepolis, such echoing noise of military instruments, as if it had been like to be subverted by fury of some terrible assault of forreign foes. Through the streets were nothing seen but most sumptuous and rich furnitures, and many and divers rare inventions, for all manner of new devised pastimes. All the people prepared themselves as appertained to the celebration of so mighty a Princes Nuptials. The Knights on the other side, though they apparrelled themselves with rich Triumphant

robes, yet had they special care of their armor, and horse, which in the afternoon they should use. The Prince Don Gallaneo (after he had agreed with his cousin that towards the evening he should be in readiness to execute their appointment) did superviously adorn himself, and accompanied with many Knights and Lords, in number two thousand, he went to the Palace, where by the way he met the Kings of Armenia, and Tessifanty, with many other strangers, amongst whom were above thirty Dukes and Earls, and with the sound of innumerable Trumpets, and all other sorts of harmonious instruments, whose far resounding noise made all the vallies there adjoyning echo with their sound till they arrived at the Palace, where they attended their return, while the excellent and fair Princess Persiana issued forth with admired beauty, that it more increased the Duke Alfirons grief. Her Gown was of white Satten cut upon cloth of Gold, tackt with Silk, and golden Twist, and drawn forth in roses, in the middle of every one was set an oriental Pearl of great bigness, that it made the Gown of such excessive value, that every one estæmed it worth no less than the whole City of Persepolis; her amber hair like the threeds of finest gold, was in tresses in a net of the same stuff knit together, wherein was placed a Coronet, set with great and fair Saphires, in the middest whereof stood a stone graven with the Image of the God of Love with his bow and arrows: whose sparkling brightness would have darkened the light of a great Torch. The Duke Alfiron when he saw her in this manner, remained altogether without feeling: which Arsileo (that was nigh him) seeing, said unto him very softly, Look to your self (most noble Duke) lest you discover what hitherto hath been unknown. Whereat the Duke recovered himself, greatly abashed at the accident: but every one was so occupied in eying the Princess, that they little regarded any other. Whereupon the Prince Arsileo and Don Brianel, took her by the hands and led her to the Palace stairs, where they all mounted on such horses and Palfreys as appertained to their high state: in which equipage they went to their chief Temple, where by the high Priest they were married according to the Pagan rites: which done, they returned to dinner, dining together, drowned in all earthly joys, wanting nothing that

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any mortal heart can by wishing comprehend, though at the banquet the thoughts of many were diverse: For the Duke Alfiron thought how he might take the Princess from Don Gallaneo, and enjoy her after the taking. Don Brianel and Arsileo, how they might spoil him of his life, & he of theirs, with the knights of the golden Image: but the Princess Persiana had all her imaginations busied more upon the promise of the knight of the golden Image, than on the diversity of dishes before her.

Dinner being ended, all the Knights were to arm themselves to be ready at the appointed hour, with their Captain in field. The Jousts were ordained to be within the City, in a spacious and large field, for that purpose appointed. Don Bellianis though sore wounded, rose and armed him in green armour, interlaced with many streaks of gold which the Duke had given him, who commanded all the Knights to march away, leaving him alone, that he might more secretly go himself. The Duke went accompanied with Arsileo and Don Brianel, ordering his men as one little esteeming his enemies, having so great defence in those two valiant warriers, and his hope in the knight of the golden image. With him joyned the Kings of Armenia and Tessifanti, having on their side above 25 thousand chosen Knights, which in comparison of the Courtiers were but a handful, for Don Gallaneo trebled that number: who by this appeared on the other side with all his troops well ordered, & with gallant demonstration. Then on an imperial theatre mounted the Soldan, the two Princesses Persiana and Aurora, that till that time had not gone abroad: who so soon as they were all setled, the Soldan commanded the signal to be given by the Trumpets, whereat Don Brianel, that had the leading of the first squadron set forwards with it against a kinsman of Don Gallaneo's, whom he unhorst with four more before he broke his Lance. The squadrons breaking through each other, made such tumult with the incounter of spears, swords, and divers other weapons, that beholders thought all the strength of the world had bæn there met: who so closed together, that having no room to handy blows, would by wrestling overthrow each other, that Horseman tumbled to the ground, and he that once fell, did more strive to get out of the preasse, than to return to the fight. But Don Brianel seeing his

his enemies to double their men in number, thrust himself within the most fury of the battel, where hard by the Soldans Theatre, meeting with a Knight of stature like a giant, called Fydasto the cruel, raised both their swords, and together at one time discharged on each other such blows, that Fydasto was overthrown and wounded on the head, and Don Brianel bowed to the pommel of his saddle, with great courage staying himself. This was one of the Knights that Don Gallaneo had charged to kill Don Brianel and Arsileo: who seeing himself down, with a devilish rage rose, and with a hoarce voice cryed, Down with the Knight that against the order and law of Tourney, beareth an edged sword; whereof he had no cause to complain, for he and the other two Knights that had the like charge did wear the like. Straight was the adventurous Knight incompassed with above a thousand Knights, that leaving their tilt, only procured his death. But he so demeaned himself among them, that in a trice he beat to the ground about twenty sore wounded: and yet his men could not come to help him, by reason of the multitude that had inclosed him. Then Arsileo seeing this, most valiantly prickt forth with his troop, and Don Galaneo, that nought imagined but their deaths, brandishing his truncheon, made against him with all his battel, that Don Brianel might not be succoured; the like did the Duke Alfiron with the remnant of his men, and in the midst of the field they met with such force, that most of them wished themselves far thence at this time. The Duke and the two Knights streight entred among their adversaries, performing it very bravely. But Arsileo, that had no other intent than to help Don Brianel, passed thorow the thickest of the squadron, that none durst withstand him, and entred within their ring, where they slew their horses, procuring the like by them. But they began to make such destruction of them, that they had laid at their feet above a hundred Knights, some slain outright, and some grievously wounded: and all that beheld the fight, thought it ill done, that so many Knights should only set upon two: insomuch that the Soldan was about to descend to part them. Where we leave them, for we must discourse a while what befel Don Bellianis in his lodging.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

What happened Don Bellianis in the Dukes Palace, with Galfeo the unknown and his Knights: his death, with the end of the Tourney.

AS ſoon as Don Gallaneo was departed to the Tourney, his couſin Galfeo the unknown took the 500 Knights, and went to the Dukes lodging, having underſtood by his ſpies how he was thence going, and that the Knight of the golden Image remained there alone: where being arrived, he commanded his men to follow him up; but then Don Bellianis having put on the Dukes armour, was ready to go to the tilt, thinking it time to be gone. But hearing a noiſe at the gate, looked out at a window falling upon the ſtairs and ſeeing ſo many Knights there, was amazed; and with a loud voice ſaid, What ſeek you here Knights, at ſuch time when all are gone to the tourney? Don Galfeo looked up, and ſeeing him in that armour, knew him not, and diſſembling his intent ſaid, Good Knight I pray you ſhew us him of the golden Image, for we muſt needs ſpeak with him. You may not enter here (ſaid he) for the Duke my maſter hath ſo commanded. And having ſo ſaid, went towards the ſtairs in great haſte, where he found Don Galfeo entring the gallery, and drawing forth his ſword, ſaid, It is in vain Knight whatſoever thou art to paſs farther here, thou or any elſe without the Duke my maſters leave. Don Galfeo hereat conceived ſuch ire by theſe words, that alſo drawing forth his ſword, ſaid, Down with the traytor that will deny us the entry. But Don Bellianis with his ſword, put himſelf among them, that in little ſpace with great fury and force he ſlew above thirty of them: which ſo amazed the reſt, that they began to retire back as far as the ſtairs. But with the fury that poſſeſſed Don Bellianis, he ſo handled them, that in an evil hour he came to ſeek him: and ſeeing Don Galfeo above the reſt troubled him, ſtrook him ſuch a blow on the ſword-arm, that cut in two it fell on the earth, and after he gave him another on his head, that cleft it down to his ears. Never was there ſeen a Knight behave himſelf better among ſo many. But they preaſed upon him in ſuch ſort, that he had like to have been greatly endangered: yet he driving them all before him

down

down ſtairs, made ſuch deſtruction of them, that for very haſte they tumbled one upon another, and ſeeing them give back, followed them out of the Palace, & in their deſpight did beat them into a broad yard, thinking better to defend himſelf there, than in ſo cloſe a room: where he ſo uſed the ſtrength of his mighty arms, that he got a horſe of many that ran loſe, wherewith he renewed his maſſacring of them. There was already gathered much people of the City with their weapons, not knowing the cauſe why ſo many were aſſembled in the Dukes Palace; and when they ſaw them all upon one Knight, they helped him. Don Gallaneo's Knight with more than the third part of their fellows dead, and ſeeing Don Galſeo ſlain, and how their treaſon for that time would not be effected by the extream valour of that Knight, fled away. Don Bellianis not willing to follow them, turned toward the Dukes Palace, where taking one of them, he ſet his ſword to his throat, and threatned to kill him, if he denied the cauſe of their coming in that manner to ſeek the Knight of the golden Image, and in preſence of many of the City, he confeſſed, how commanded by their Lord Don Gallaneo, they came to murder him. What meant your Lord by doing ſo? (ſaid Don Bellianis.) I know no more than I have ſaid (replied the man.) God be praiſed (ſaid Don Bellianis) that your Lords treachery hath not taken effect. Then mounting his horſe he rid to the tilt-yard, where he looked on every ſide, and ſaw how the Dukes men tarried back, ſeeking for the Princeſs, Arſileo and Don Brianel, and not ſeeing them, he took a big Lance, and put himſelf againſt Don Gallaneo's Knights, and the firſt he met he overthrew to the ground, doing the like to above thirty before he brake it, and incouraging the Dukes failing troops, renewed their fight ſo fiercely upon the Courtiers, that they feared to loſe what they had before won, and like a man diſtract, not ſeeing his companions, ſo wounded his adverſaries, that happy was he that fartheſt could get from him, whereby every one made him ample paſſage to go by, for never a blow he gave neither with ſword or lance, but he overthrew a Knight. Which the Sophi ſeeing cryed out, O mighty Mahomet! what admirable ſtrength is this of you Knight! But all this while Don Gallaneo and his Knights had ſo roundly beſet Don Brianel and Arſileo,

that

that it was impossible they should escape alive, though most valiantly they defended themselves. When there arrived a Knight to Don Gallaneo and in his ear told him all that befel his cousin Don Galseo with Don Bellianis, who being not far off from them, he pointed to him, and said, This is the Knight that hath so massacred your men. Don Gallaneo turning to see him, saw how with an incredible fury he assailed his Knights that had encompassed the Princess, & that with four blows he struck down four Knights, and making little account of the rest, alighted, and seeing they would not suffer the Princes to mount on horseback, said that every one might hear: Get upon this my horse, Prince Arsileo, for since with so great treacherous cowardise you are used, make it known even on their dearest lives. They knowing his voice, conceived such joy, that almost they knew not what they did: who going about to take a fresh horse, so many Knights laid on them that they could not do it: which Don Bellianis seeing, and how it waxed late to be revenged on Don Gallaneo, taking Don Brianel in his arms, in despight of all the Knights, set him on his horse, and being on his own with rage and thirsty fury of long-desired revenge, began such destruction among them, that he made wide passage for himself and his companions: And seeing two Giants come against him of four, which Don Gallaneo had brought to the jousts for the purpose aforesaid, he prepared for them, and receiving one of their blows upon his shield, that was so cruel that it cut it in pieces, he so wounded the other with like strength, that falling on his fingers, it cut them off clean with the Mace he held: but the other did second so huge a stroke, that he was forced to hold by his horse neck. There was never Tiger seen more fierce, nor Lion more furious than Don Bellianis seemed, who raising himself on his stirrops, and holding his sword with both his hands, gave him such a terrible blow on his thigh, that it entred so far as the bone, wherewith he shortly after died.

What Knight so valiant may this be (said the Soldan) that doth such wonders? I would willingly have had the Knight of the golden Image here, that he might try his force with this. That Knights deeds be not comparable to these (said the Princess Persiana to her Father,) the more to cover her intent of any

thing that might after happen: for well she knew that Don Bellianis would be in the battel, and so judged that he was. But he following in search of Don Gallaneo, found him at last not far from the Soldans scaffold, where likewise the Princess was, and as a swift hound that hath his game on foot, fearing to lose it, so did he against Don Gallaneo, who also made towards him, and meeting struck each other such puissant blows, that the sparkles of fire flew from their armour, but Don Gallaneo tumbled to the ground sore wounded. When Don Bellianis so saw him, he suddenly alighted from his horse: so did many of Don Gallaneo's Knights, to help their master: then arrived the Duke Alfiron with four thousand Knights, and set so furiously upon them, that maugre their force he made them retire back. In which time Don Bellianis wounded him again, wherewith the sword fell out of his hand, and the Duke seeing him on foot, and that to be the time for his revenge, ran against his horse and overturned him flat on the ground, and trampled twice or thrice on him with his horses feet, making him breath his last. Which the Soldan seeing, cried out, commanding him he should not hurt him; but the Duke made as though he heard him not; whereupon the Soldan seeing the little account was made of him, like to burst with extream grief, descended, still more and more renewing his laments for Don Gallaneo's death, crying, kill, kill the traytor, that so villanously in my presence murthered my son. All the people at the Soldans command, set on the Duke and Don Bellianis: whence the jousts begun for triumph and pleasure, were turned to death and destruction, that the fields flowed with blood. The Kings of Armenia and Tessisanti, that saw the battel so hot and cruel, went to the Soldan, and said to him, Suffer not, dread Soveraign, all this company to perish, seeing you know the Duke hath as much power to defend, as you to offend him, therefore command the fight to cease: for if the Duke be guilty of Don Gallaneo's death, you may by law convict him. The Soldan knowing it to be so, and that before the Duke died by that means, none would remain with life, took his counsel, and commanding the battel there to end, said thus to the Duke. Get you out of my Persepolis (Duke) unless you will here dye unheard, and unexcused.

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The Prince Don Bellianis being with him, bad him obey the Soldans command, assuring himself their purpose could not but have a good end. The Duke taking his counsel, very joyfully commanded the retreat to be sounded, whereat the Knights as well of the one as of the other party, left their fight, returning every one to their Captain, attending his command. Who were here able to express what great gladness the Princess Perfiana conceived with Don Gallaneo's death? who lest it might be discerned called out upon all the Knights of her guard, to imprison, and bring her the Duke, and the Knight that committed that treachery. The guard replied they might not, because the Soldan was there: who returned extream sorrowful, and so furious with rage, that very fire seemed to sparkle from his eyes, that all which beheld him were astonished at his stern looks.

And although the King of Tessisanty intreated him to return to his Palace, yet he could like no counsel, save what savoured of revenge. But turning to the dead body, saw his Daughter bewail his untimely death, and knowing she always refused willingly to marry him, and now seeing her grievous laments for his decease, suspected it was done by her appointment, and not regarding his fatherly love, but governed with rage, took her from the ground, and said,

It bots thee not now Princess to dissemble, for I am sure Don Gallaneo was slain with your consent, and since you would not obey me when I would, I will now punish you as you deserve.

Whereupon he commanded her to be shut up in a Tower, and surely guarded, not hearing her speak. And going thence, commanded all the people of the City to arm them, intending to imprison the Duke in his house, imagining Don Gallaneo's death had been with his consent; and greatly grieved because he could not know that Knight that so endangered him in the battel, not thinking on Don Bellianis, having left him sore wounded.

CHAP. XVIII

What happened to *Don Bellianis* without *Perſepolis*. How he delivered two Damoſels from certain Knights, and whence they were: and how he ſlew the Dragon of the Riphean-Wood.

THe Duke ſeeing his purpoſe thitherto ſort as he wiſhed, with Don Gallaneo's death, reſolved altogether to follow the counſel of the Knight of the golden Image. Whereupon he returned to his Palace: and the night having darkned the world, Don Bellianis left him in the plain field, feigning to go out of the City, though all the Knights there endeavoured to ſtay him, deſiring to know him ere he went. But getting from them all, eſcaped out of the City, the better in that obſcurity to return to his lodging: and he had not gone far, but his wounds began extreamly to grieve him, inſomuch he could not ſtay himſelf on horſe-back, for with their new bleeding they opened, making him ſeem a fountain with ſo many ſprings, and ſeeing himſelf ſo ill, he thought he ſhould not be able to returne to Perſepolis, unleſs his wounds were bound up: and ſo alighting from his horſe, he ſaw two damoſels come toward him, riding in ſuch haſte, as he thought they did rather fly, than on their Palfreys ſwiftly run. Don Bellianis putting himſelf before them, ſaid: What is the cauſe (fair Ladies,) that maketh you to ride ſo faſt? Oh for Gods ſake ſtay us not, but if you will ſave your life follow us, and by the way we will declare the whole circumſtance unto you. Here it will be better (ſaid he;) and among theſe trees you may hide your ſelves. So they taking his counſel, followed his advice, and beginning to diſcover their adventure, lo they perceived through thoſe trees a terrible Dragon, ſo fearful in ſight, that it ſtruck amazement in the beholders; and although the night were very dark, yet ſuch light iſſued from him through the great abundance of fire proceeding from his jaws, that it ſeemed hells mouth opened to ſwallow them at that inſtant. The Ladies being overcome with fear, betook themſelves about the Knight of the golden Image, having loſt the power of their intended flight. But he ſeeing it was no time to be idle, roſe from the ground with his ſword in his hand, and made againſt the helliſh monſter, at that time wiſhing rather

to

to have his armour given him by Bellona buckled about his body, than be invested Emperor of a larger Empire than his Fathers. At this instant the Dragon with an infernal fury flying against him, overthrew him with his breast, and returning to catch him with his talons, to pluck him in pieces, he whom fear never could blind, leapt aside, but with great difficulty, for being over reached, the cruel beast with one of his paws drew him to him, & pierced both armor & flesh, even to the bones, with his deadly claws: but the Knight forsaking his sword, stab'd his dagger 4 or 5 times into his heart under his wings. The fearful beast through extremity of pain left him, stretching himself and labouring in the pangs of death. He was of such a wonderfull greatness, that he was above 25 foot long, in bignes bigger than a great bull, whose like was never seen by any. After the Knight of the golden Image had finished this haughty deed, and most unequal fight, he fell on his knees, rendring thanks to his Heavenly Protector, that he delivered him from so great a danger, though with fear to escape the peril of his mortal wounds, wondering how he had Blood left in his Veins, having lost such great quantities thereof. And going to the damsels that with fear were not able to fly, he said, Fear now no more (fair Ladies) for the causer of your timorous trance, shall put you in no further peril. They recovering their benummed senses, scarce knowing what to say, the one lifting up her voice replied, We cannot (sir Knight) express the many thanks due by us, for this so great good work, whose greatness our merits can never deserve unless by memorating through the earth your high prowesses, that the perpetual remembrance of this ample act may never be drowned in the black centre of oblivion. And seeing (as it should seem) you were before wounded, we beseech you to withdraw your self within this Forrest, that being unseen of passengers, we may dress them. I will obey any thing you shall command (said he) and so stepping among those trees, they disarmed him, and began to search his wounds (being very skilful in that mystery) and greatly marvelled how it had been possible he escaped death, yet though despairing of his safety performed their duty with all diligence, and having dressed his wounds they demanded what he would do. To whom he answered, We will presently to the City, that I may

there

there have my wounds cured. But how came you hither said they, being thus wounded? whereto he answered. Doubting I should be bloodless through the great quantity that thereof I had lost, and through faintness, being able to go no further, here I stayed to bind them. Shall we (said they) take your armor with us to the City? No, leave it here (replied he) I little need it, respecting the occasion of my going thither. And so mounting on horseback (but with much pain) and the Damosels on their Palfreys, he by the way thus spake. Tell me I pray you the occasion of your flight when I first met you? To whom they answered: You shall know (Sir Knight) we do belong to the most excellent peerless and above all the most fair, the fairest Princess Florisbella, that having sent us to a wise woman, whose habitation is far hence on a most craggy and barren mountain (and Bellona is her name) to know the fortunes of a beauteous Princess conducted by her (called Aurora) of whom since that time no news hath been heard, through the death of King Pompeiano her father, traiterously slain by Don Gallaneo, and his Kingdom won by a son of this Sophi, called the Knight of the Images: And we having heard that the Sophi now marrieth his Daughter to the said Don Gallaneo, disguisedly we came to see the said festivals: and coming not far hence, we were suddenly surprised by a most fearful Giant accompanied with some twenty Knights almost in bignes like himself: who having taken us (in the Knights approach) spying afar off some twenty Knights, we crying to them for help, yelded to our request. But the Giant and his Knights at the first encounter unhorst above the half of them. And so we foreseeing the ill success like to insue, betook our selves to the swift courses of our Palfreys, till we met you. And now (Sir Knight) for all we discourst the success of our fortunes, yet still fear the overtaking of those uncivil Knights: because through our weakness we are like to suffer the cruel stroke of none-sparing death. So approaching near the City, they descried three men clad all in armour, who having them within view knew the Damosels: whereat they said, Our travel is now at an end, for we have found what we sought.

The Ladies perceiving them to be the Giants Knights, were like to fall from their Palfreys: to whom the Knights said, Ye

now

now shall not escape us, but shall go to our Lord and Master the Giant Fellistone that sends for you. Don Bellianis became exceeding wroth, seeing himself both sore wounded and without armour; yet he thus said to them. In courtesie brave Knights I pray you oppose not your violent hands, against poor distressed Ladies that with me are going. We thought (replied they) you would content your self with your own liberty, medling not with theirs: but since you would not know when you were well, you shall also go with us; wherewith they would have bound him, He perceiving that his courteous words prevailed not, stept to one, and snatcht the Lance out of his hand, in despight of him and his friends, tumbling him headlong to the ground. The others would have striken him with their Spears, but he warily escaped their blows; and fiercely running at one, thrust the Lance thorow his body, that lifeless he measured his length on the earth. The third struck at him so mightily, that had he not lightly stept aside (being as he went unarmed) he had made his Lance appear at his back: yet nevertheless he ran his Spear thorow his thigh: so he feeling himself sore wounded, drew his never failing sword, and gave him so cruel a blow on his shoulders that he cut him down-right, that his parted body fell on each side of his horse. Don Bellianis going to dismount, to dispatch him that first fell, felt his thigh pin'd to his saddle with a truncheon of the Spear: but seeing the Knight did not stir, left him.

All this while the Damzels stood amazed with wonder seeing such destruction in so short time, and with extream joy they thus said, We can never end (sir Knight) the celebrating of your most high, and more than human Chivalries, though thereby we be not credited, which for all our selves have seen them, yet their admiration so astonisheth us, that we scarce dare acknowledge them to be true. He hearing himself thus commended, replied: Overpassing these unworthy praises, let us (fair Ladies) enter the City, for my great wounds require speedy remedy; and know that your travel is now ended, for I do belong unto the Princess Aurora, whom when you see before any, dissemble her knowledge, for her present occasions so require it. They joyful of such news, answered they would. And so keeping on

their

their pace, they came to the Dukes Palace, where they found all the Knights in armor. Don Bellianis discovering himself to a Knight intreated him to lead him to his lodging, if he could, unknown to the Duke, till the next morning. Who replied he might not, for the Duke stayed for him with the rest of the Knights, not minding to sleep untill his coming. Then help me off my horse (said Don Bellianis.) The Knight going to do it, spyed the spears truncheon, which he had not taken away, fearing himself to bleed to death; and the Knight said, you are so sore wounded, that it were best I call the Duke. Unhorse me first (said Don Bellianis,) and take out this truncheon: The Knight did so, which was so imbrued in his blood, wherewith it stuck so fast in his flesh that the drawing thereof so extremly increased his pain that after he was not able to stand, but was carried in two Knights arms into the Hall, where they found the Duke with many other Lords; also accompanied with the Princes Don Brianel and Arsileo, who though they were greatly wounded, were determined presently to ride in demand of the Knight of the Golden Image, if they heard not of him. But seeing him come into the Hall in that manner, wared pale, thinking him wounded to death, and ran to him. And the Princess Aurora that first spied him, was first that approached, who with tears in great abundance trickling down her Ivory-roled cheeks, to see him in such danger, without impeach of any, and respect of none, fell on her knees before him, kissing his hands, both with joy and grief, insomuch that in her good will toward him, it may be believed she passed his cousin Arsileo. The Prince Don Bellianis raising her from the ground, and most kindly embracing her, said: Use not so much undeserved courtesie (most soveraign Lady) to so mean a Knight e of so small fame as my self, whose little services will never merit any of these favours, except in counting me, as one of your meanest servitors. Then were these grætings interrupted by Don Brianel and the rest, that received him with no less courtesies and embracings, than if he were their general commander, especially the Duke, who needs would welcome him on his knees though he knew not his high descent, save that he acknowledged he had by his means repossest his whole estate and life; and with infinite gladness he thus began: I greatly wonder most renowned

Knight

Knight of the Golden Image) how you were able to be at the tourney after I here saw the prowels by you done. To whom he replied; I have (most excellent Duke) done no act worthy of your memory. So will (said he) none of Don Galfeo's Knights affirm. For at our return we found above 200 of them with their master slain. And we beseech you to dilate unto us the cause of their coming to our Palace, and what after hapned to you since your departure, having staped so long, remaining thus cruelly wounded. Then thus (replied he) they purposed treacherously to murther me, though by the help of the immortal Gods, their intent was frustrated. The rest I am not able to discourse, for my wounds will not permit me; but of these Ladies shall you know the event of all things, whose good entertainment I request, even as to my Lady and Mistres the Princes here present.

Whereupon Don Bellianis was carried to his lodging, and laid in his bed, where by the Damsels he was again dressed, who greatly wondred at his many and dangerous wounds: and having done, they left him alone, quietly to take his rest; for his extream pain, chiefly of the wound of his thigh, made him roar like a bull baited with many dogs. The Ladies being come forth were most courteously entertained of the Lords, greatly admiring the haughty deeds they heard of that valourous Knight. Straight were the tables covered (good order being given for the Palaces safety) and they all sate down to supper, where the damsels discoursed the acts of the Knight of the Golden Image, in their presence done, saying, Scarce dare we report his admirable Chivalries, lest our words be not credited: yet have we been eye-witnesses of his deeds. Then were they intreated by the Knights to unfold them, saying, that if they had seen what before hapned him, they would little esteem those they feared to rehearse.

There can none be comparable to these (answered the Damosels:)and therefore we will satisfie you: and so recounted all that him befel after they met with him, with words of high renown, to the eternizing of his glory. Whosoever shall hear (said the Duke) the admired wonders of this Knight, may hardly believe them: And sure I am, no Knight will ever perform what he hath done in so short time: and so reiterating all his exploits (as heretofore are set down.) Oh what

posterity will believe in future ages, these no less great than admirable prowesses of this not only victorious, but happy & never sufficient praised Knight. These and such like matters did these Princes treat of at table concerning Don Bellianis. The Princess had by this known the Damosels, and they her: yet either thought the contrary by their silence. But the Princess imagining the cause was that they were so forewarned by Don Bellianis, said, she would withdraw her self to rest, and take those Damosels with her, and was conducted to their Chamber. The Knights after her departure settled themselves to the ordering of all their necessaries, touching their menaced peril; for they had intelligence how the Sophy having understood of Don Galfeo's death, at his departing from the Tourney by some of the scaped Knights: yet not informed of the truth, but that going to the Dukes Palace to accompany him to the Tourny he was there slain. Whereupon willed all in the City should arm themselves. But the Duke and his faction little feared him; having within the said City above fifteen thousand Knights his friends, all in arms, in readiness, well appointed at command. The Princess being in her chamber made fast the door, to whom the Damozels humbled themselves, craving to kiss her hands: But she not suffering it embraced them with great joy, to whom they thus spake.

What hath become of your royal person? Oh most excellent Madam, whose loss we could not but imagine, having been so toss and subject to misfortunes and calamities? We cannot (great Princess) declare the sufficiency of our joy, conceived with your presence. And no less will the Princess Florisbella receive: who only for this cause sent us to our Aunt, the sage Bellona: Wherefore we beseech you, tell us, who these Knights be, whose personages, compositions and excellent conditions, deserve admiration, especially him that brought us to the injoying of your company. I (replied she) know no other, but that I met them in a most strange place, and I thank the immortal Gods, unconstrained, they condescended to the promise of their aids, and already my fathers most unfortunate death hath partly been revenged, for this Knight hath slain Don Gallaneo. And thus continued their chat without sleeping, till the better two parts of the night were past.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

What the Sophy did after the battel: and how the green armor of Don Bellianis was brought him to the City.

THere is no tongue able to expreſs the great grief the Sophy did conceive by Don Gallaneo and his couſins death whom he dearly loved: and ſæing that the Duke kept within his Palace, he ſent early the next morning above a thouſand Knights to ſæk him in the græn armor: for he determined by all means to know who he was, having underſtood he was not gone home with the Duke.

The Knights obeying his command, came to the place where the ugly monſtrous beaſt lay ſlain, the ſight whereof ſo feared their horſes that not able to ſtay them, in deſpight of their riders, they ran away with them. The like timorouſneſs ſurprized the Knights, beholding the monſtrouſie of the Dragon that they durſt not approach to ſæ what he was: yet ſæing he ſtirred not one of them taking heart-a-grace, eſtæming himſelf leſs fearful than the reſt, alighted on foot, and trembling, went where the dead beaſt lay, and ſæing him not move, with the huge quantity of blood wherein he wallowed, call'd his companions, bidding them not fear, for it was not alive: who well viewing it, were greatly aſtoniſhed to ſæ ſo deformed a thing, and ſearching where he had bæn ſtrucken, they ſaw his wounds above the legs and wings, whereby they judged the Knight that had ſlain him, could not but be ſorely hurt by being ſo nigh, that the wounds ſhewed they had bæn made with a Daggar. And one following the ſigns of the blood, found the Damoſels Mantles that they had left with the Knights armor, which preſently they knew, & aſſured themſelves he ſlew that moſt ugly beaſt: in reſpect whereof they nothing eſtæmed what he had performed to their coaſts in the Tourney, with the ſight of the prodigious and infernal monſter ſlain by his hands. And ſo they took great compaſſion on him for the much blood he there had ſhed: and ſo finding no ſign nor tracing of his to find him, and ſæing him armourleſs, reſolved to return unto the Sophy and tell him what they had ſæn, preſenting him the Knights armor, and the Damoſels Mantles: Wherewith going out of the wood, lighted on the two knights ſlain, and turning them

over, much muſed at the horrible blow which the one had, whole like they never had ſæn before: and going away they met with four Knights, that knowing the damoſels mantles, ſaid: We beſæch you (gentle Knights) tell us where we may find the Ladies owners of thoſe Mantles? We know not (ſaid they) but why do ye demand it? To know what became of a Knight that accompanieth them. Why ſæk ye him? (demanded they) for we alſo would employ the utmoſt of our power to find and carry him to our Lord the Soldan. Then know (ſaid the four) that the Giant Feliſtone (well known of you) commanded us to find him, to give him his due chaſtiſement: though truely yeſternight he performed ſuch an attempt, that we believe there breathed not in the Univerſe any to do the like: for thræ Knights of our company going to ſæk thoſe Damzels (which from us fled,) and about to take them againſt his will, wounded theſe two as you ſæ, leaving the other on the earth little better than dead. And ſince we underſtood they be all within the City.

Then go along with us: for if they be there, they cannot be hid. And beſides thoſe things, he hath done others of greater admiration. So in ſuch talk they continued their way to the City, till they arrived at the Soldans Palace, who ſeeing the Knights armour, thought they alſo brought him: which greatly gladded him, deſcending half way to mæt them, demanded for the Knight; to whom they anſwered. We bring him not (right mighty Sovereign) but come to tell you the greateſt wonder that ever you heard of, for he alone hath put to death the mighty Dragon of the Ryphean woods, your whole Kingdomes deſtruction. O mighty Jove (ſaid the Soldan) who may believe, but with great difficulty, ſuch a thing except his eyes ſhould ſæ it. Surely (dread Lord) it is ſo (replied they) and we judge by the great abundance of blood in that place ſhed, that he cannot but be almoſt dead.

Moreover he hath done another act of no leſs wonder: for coming unarmed with our two damzels he combated with thræ Knights & vanquiſhes them, cleaving one downright in the middle, and it is alſo ſaid that he came into the City. The Soldan ſtood muſing with himſelf whether the knight of the golden image might be he diſguiſedly entring the Tourny for the Dukes ſake.

Yet

yet though he is unlikely, knowing he remained sore wounded at the combat had with the Knights of the unhappy bridge. But still perswaded himself it should be he, imagining no Knight in all the City so hardy, as for to attempt the like. And seeing the Knight could not be found, he commanded all the people of the city to arms, and came to his Palace, for he determined to assault the Duke, who fearing the same, had all his men in readiness. Great was the hurly burly through the City among the popularity inquiring one of another what they should do, foreseeing some cruel battel to be impendent over their heads.

CHAP. XX

How the Kings of Armenia and Tessifanty conferred with the Sophy, of the order taken between them, about the Duke: and how he presented himself before the Sophy.

The doubtful state of these tumultuous cares on either side, hanging on the uncertain arbitrating sentence of fortune: the rumour of the commonalty of the City seemed no less, than if the utter ruine thereof were evidently known. Whereby the Soldan supposing many inclining to the Dukes faction proclaimed by sound of trumpet, that none should aid nor favour him on pain of death, and take him for a traytor; for only he purposed to do according to law and justice, if he were found guilty. The beauteous Princes Persiana well heard of these procedings, whose woes for them, penetrated her tender heart, though'twas thought she sore lamented because her Father had imprisoned her. But she sending for the Kings of Armenia and Tessifanty, they presently went to her, who being alone, admitted them to her presence, whom she with many tears intreated to become mediators, betwixt the Soldan and the Duke, and that they would not consent the terminating of those affairs to be by the event of war, seeing in the end she only should be the only loser, her honour being tossed to and fro on such undecent tryals. They with great willingness promised to do the utmost of their possibility: and seeing the matter suffered no delay, and that they likewise ventured some part of their own, in that they were the Dukes near allies, did then take leave of the Princes & departed toward

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the Soldan, whom they found with all his men ready to march. So approaching to him, he greatly rejoyced with their presence, thereby thinking they would joyn with him, supposing at first they were gone to the Duke. Whereupon he courteously made out to meet them: who (their customed honour performed) humbled themselves to kiss his hand: but he would not by any means consent thereto: whereat they thus began. Alas (dread Lord) what portends these your troops, whose sudden arms cannot but threaten death and utter desolation to this city? but most of all, what means your self to be in person in so dangerous an enterprize, having so many hardy Knights able to attempt any important action at your command? I have none (replied the Sophy) whose dutious service and loyalty to me hath deserved such confidence as these affairs require, especially since the absence of the Prince my son. And well may you see the treason done against me by the Duke: for I am sure it was done both by his consent and my daughters command; and am certain that he which all these harms hath wrought, is the Knight of the golden Image: and so discoursed what he had understood of the Knights, and how he was so sore wounded, that his life was in suspence, and also that he was the same that slew Don Galileo. All which was true; for that distressed Knight was in such case, that all his companions greatly doubted his recovery, for which their sorrow was so great, that they wished, to disburden themselves thereof, they might be even in their enemies chiefest troops. For in readiness and willingness of mind, there wanted nought but the beginning of the conflict. The two Kings not a little marvelled at the Soldans discourse, whereupon the King of Armenia took occasion to speak as followeth. The Knight of the golden Image is not in that greatness of fault as you judge him in (most mighty Lord) for if you would but in the equal balance of right reason weigh the cause, you may plainly see how greatly Don Galaneo laboured to kill the adventurous Knight; and the Prince Arsileo, against all the Laws and Rites of Tourney, nought regarding your awful clamours to the contrary: but then more procured their deaths: whereat no marvel if the Knight of the golden Image and the Duke in their own defence did slay him. And we know, that the Knight in the green armour, was he of the golden

Image,

Image, for we learned it of some of them that fled when Don Galfeo died, that he which slew him and vanquished them, was the same that returned Victor of the Tourney. So that you may well think he determined to do by them, what they did to him and his. Of all which things you should better inform your self, before you come to these extreams. But if notwithstanding you will persevere in these rigorous determinations, consider the many thousand deaths thereby like to ensue: for the Duke will endure no wrong. Remember also (great Lord the Knight of the golden image is he (though the chiefest cause of Don Gallaneo's death) that freed you from two great inconveniences, one from the adventure of the unhappy Bridge, the other by the death of the Ryphean Dragon; and that hereof consisteth your own honor in your daughters innocency; and that the Duke may plead his case: and we our selves will go with him, and procure this matter to be tried by combat, or by any other means by you thought fitter, which if you grant, you shall eternally bind us to your allegiance. If you cause the Duke (replied the Sophy) to come and submit himself, I promise you there shall be no wrong proffered him, nor any thing contrary to the right of law and justice; which I only do, that if any of Don Gallaneo's kindred should expect any revenge at my hands for his death, they may know what I have done herein. And hereupon I pawn my kingly faith, and royal word unto you. Then said they, Upon this order you may dismis your men unto their several homes, for we will perform what we have promised. Whereupon the Soldan commanded every man to retire to his quarter, he himself going to the Court to expect the Kings return, who straight repaired to the Dukes Palace, where they greatly rejoyced to see the good order and care by them kept: insomuch that the Soldan was not there able to enter by force of arms, though he brought all his forces redoubled. They being there, demanded for the Duke, and understanding that he was in Don Bellianis chamber, thither went to speak with him: where they saw how the Knight of the golden image had his wounds by those Damozels dressed. The Duke received them according to their state, and would have led them into another room, but they would not, looking on the Knights wounds, which they judged the greatest

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that ever they had seen, whereat they much sorrowed, supposing he would not scape them, though they were greatly satisfied to see with what nimblenes those Ladies dressed him. And having done, they thus said: with such Surgeons (sir Knight) you ought to feel halfe the pain enforced by your wounds: whereto he answered. It is so great Lords, for though I should feel never so much, this is double comfort unto me, for else I should not be made happy with the fruition of your royal presence, joyntly with the duty you bind me to in vouchsafing the remembrance of so mean a Knight, being thus pitiously wounded, and not able to leave my bed to imploy my self in these troublesome affairs of my Lord the Duke. Take no care for them, Sir Knight, said the King of Tessifanty, for we come to no other effect, and hope we shall have no great denial about them, and though we should find any contradiction, yet the Duke shall be so favoured as he shall reasonably doubt nothing that may to him happen. And they declared the manner of the appointment made by the Soldan, so that the Dukes justice should be evidently seen, and be at liberty to answer all objections, or else present his Champion, to try it in the battel, against whosoever should at his hands demand the death of Don Gallaneo, and that in the mean space the Duke would yeld himself to prison, or we for him: all which was betwen us and him so agreed. And know (sir Knight) it is certainly bruited abroad that he which vanquished the Tourny, and was cause of Don Gallaneo's death, with his cousin Don Galseo, and that slew the Riphean Dragon, and the Giant Felistone's three Knights, is your self. Don Bellianis somewhat altered his countenance hearing this, yet seing the Sophi and others knew all his doings, faintly made this reply. First (mighty Lords) have a care what they demand of the Duke, and after we shall have time, if I escape these wounds, to provide for all things else. And moreover on my faith, the Soldan deals unadvisedly and unjustly in his demands against the Duke and should not make account of two such traytors, as Don Gallaneo and Galseo; whom if in case I did slay, I did very well, considering with what treachery the one would have murthered me in my bed, and the other my Champions in the Tourney: and had I ben in that state at more ease, I had better with my deds

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shewn what I cannot so well express in words. They were all amazed to see with what passion Don Bellianis pronounced these speches, and they perceiving he had reason, would proceed no further in that talk, but turning to the Duke prayed him to resolve with himself to do what they required. I will do (replyed he) neither more nor less in any thing, than what the Knight of the golden Image shall command me. I humbly kiss your hand (said he) for this your high favour, though in all things else it is well known, that my duty binds me to obey you. But to our matter, I am of opinion, saving better judgment, and reposing our confidence on the royal words of these great Kings, you may fearless present your self before the Soldan; for I trust you shall have no injury offered you; thereof be assured (said the Kings) for so the Soldan hath vowed. The Damosels that came with Don Bellianis after he killed the Dragon, stepping to him, said. We have heard (sir Knight) the Princess Persiana is in a strong Tower imprisoned, by the commandement of the Soldan her father; wherefore consider, what best in this case may be done, talking as little as you may, because of endangering your wounds and your self. When the Duke was departing, Don Bellianis called to him Don Brianel and Arsileo, and prayed them to accompany the Duke, and answer for the Princess Persiana and himself, as occasion should be offered: They being all ready, straight took their way to the Soldans Palace, leaving the Knight of the golden Image in talk with the Princess Aurora and Florisbella's damosels, which were both beautifull and witty, greatly admiring his courage and magnanimity, from whose presence they were not parted day nor night, but had placed their beds a little from his, the better to watch and help him at his need, who (excepting the divine powers of the omnipotent God) were cause of his health, being in that science both singular and excellent.

CHAP. XXI.

What happened to the Duke with the Soldan. How the Knight of the golden Image and Princeſs Perſiana were challenged for the deaths of Don Gallaneo and Galfeo, by the fearfull Felliſtone and his brethren: and how the challenge was accepted.

SO ſoon as the Duke was arrived at the Soldans Palace with the company mentioned in the precedent Chapter, and thinking it unmeet to advertiſe him thereof, they all diſmounted and on foot entred the great Hall where the Sophy ſate: who when he ſaw him come with his blood changed in his face, as being the man that mortally hated the Duke, which now being nigh him, humbled himſelf on his knee, requeſted the kiſſing of his royal hands. You need them not Duke, (ſaid the Sophy) ſince you account your deſerts ſo meritorious, and of your ſelf ſo highly, that I ſending for you to appear before me, utterly denied it, and with all your power reſiſted my commands. The Gods forbid I ſhould have committed any ſuch offence (replied the Duke.) And well do you know, dread ſoveraign, that I never eſteemed in any your affairs, to hazard both life and my whole eſtate in your ſervice. But doubting your Highneſs (being full of ire) would not hear me; according to the juſtice of my cauſe, I rather choſe to withdraw my ſelf to my lodging, where to this inſtant I remained: from whence I was called by theſe noble Kings to appeare before your mightineſs. So being in this conference there entred the Hall three Gyants, the greateſt, ugliеſt, and fierceſt that any humane nature could produce: they were all armed ſaving the heads, whoſe helms and ſhields were born by their Squires: on them attended 30 Knights, not much inferior to them in bigneſs: all their outward garments were of mourning cloth, who went directly to the Soldan, began thus, with a voice whoſe hollow roaring made all the Hall reſound. High and mighty Lord, we believe that ſmall is the notice come to your ears of us, having but little traced thy dominions, although we have endeavoured with all our power, and the utmoſt of our deſires, the advancing of your houſe by our ſervice, whereof your ſon the Prince Perianeo is a ſufficient witneſs, as the man in the war of Antioch being termed the Knight of the Images, we aided, of him may

you

you know I am King of Cyprus, otherwise called Felistone the fierce, brother to these Knights here present, that knowing you married the Princess Persiana to our cousin Don Gallaneo of Antioch, we came to honor his Nuptials, and arriving nèr this city, two of my Knights whom I sent to sèk two damzels of my company, were slain, by one which I understand to be called the Knight of the Golden Image, of whom there are also many tales huited of his valour. Moreover we were certified that he and the Duke Alfiron slew in the Tourney most treacherously, the Prince Don Gallaneo and his cousin Don Galseo. And though we are assured that you will execute on them the punishment that so vild treason requires, (for we have understood the imprisonment of your daughter the Princess Persiana, consenter to their deaths.) Notwithstanding we being persons whom this aforesaid matter concerns, do accuse as well the Duke as the Knight of the Golden Image, with the Princess Persiana your daughter, as authors and actors of their deaths, and therefore traytors and malefactors. And I vow to approve it against them both together, or with what Knight the Princess shall appoint in her defence: for I will not be counted a Gyant or King of the Land where any of us is known, if I make them not presently confess this their treason, that you may chastise it as you shall better judge: and herewith ended his speech. The great rage conceived by those Knights hearing themselves called traytors, cannot be sufficiently expressed. The Soldan understanding of the Gyant what he was, rose from his seat to entertain him as his state required, intreats him to sit down. It bots not (said he) but only that ye send for these traytors, to answer my objections: for I have promised not to put off my armor, till I be satisfied with my revenge. The Duke stepping even where the Gyant was talking, whom when he better saw his deformity and bigness (for though himself were of good stature, yet reached not to his middle) somewhat scared him: but remembring by what valiant Knights he was backt, resolutely made this answer to the Giants former speeches. If we had not heretofore heard, and now by experience sèn thy great pride (K. of Cyprus) we had reason to think no humane creature could have procreated a thing so monstrous, and to her self so contrary, though such as thou art are always sèn from the off-spring of so

vild a kind, whereby thou ſæmeſt to colour thy evil grounded reaſons and arrogant pride, in joyning kindred with the Soldan, our dread Sovereign. And if in caſe thou be ſuch a one as thy ſpæch declares, thou more obſcureſt with thy evil dæds his royal progeny, than ever with words thou mayſt amplifie it. Moreover know, I am the Duke Alfiron, whom thou comeſt to accuſe: and whereas thou ſayeſt, I and the Knight of the golden Image have treacherouſly ſlaine Don Gallaneo, I reply, thou moſt falſly lieſt, which my ſelf am ready to approve in battel, or præſent my Champion for the ſame. The Prince Arſilco, all this while ready to choak with extream rage, yet moderately ſaid thus. Since thou art altogether overwhelmed in the treaſons thou ſpeakeſt of (Cyprus King) know that touching the Knight of the golden Image, thou haſt moſt falſly lyed in thy throat, and therefore bring with thee one of thy brothers, or whom elſe thou wilt. For if thou wilt not ſtay until his wounds be cured, my ſelf in his place will approve the utmoſt of thy ſpæches to be mærly falſe, for he is not a Prince nor Knight, that would have procured Don Gallaneo's death, except forced thereunto, through his great treaſons and demerits, yea his couſin alſo, like a vile traytor died, treacherouſly going to murther him in his bed, Don Brianel diſſembling his anger, with a ſcoffing laughter, not ſuffering the King of Cyprus to reply, ſaid to him. I think King, Knight, or Giant, or what thou wilt, thou thoughteſt thy challenge would return unaccepted, becauſe no Knight might be here able in bigneſs and deformity to anſwer thæ, and yet in my opinion thy pride is far greater than thy body. But paſſing this, know, that in the Princeſs Perſiana's name, I will make the third in combat, againſt one of thy brothers or thy ſelf, to prove (with the help of the immortal Gods) that in the great untroth breathed forth by thæ, thou moſt treacherouſly lyeſt.

And ſæing we are all prepared to fight, be it preſently while the paſſion of thy furiouſneſs is hot, leſt after thou excuſe thy ſelf by the weight of thy armour overlong worn. The fearfull Giant ſæing with what courage and audacity of ſpæch theſe Knights ſpake to him, was divers times about to lay hands on his boyſtrous axe, thereby to puniſh the laviſh of their tongues, no more.

more esteeming the combat with an hundred of them, than doth a furious Bull a troop of little whelps, and being ready to burst with fury, uttered these words to the Soldan.

By the high powers of the Gods (dread Lord) if these silly mad-men were not before thy sacred presence, I would have inflicted such heavy punishment on them, that they should be examples to all others as should presume to speak in such manner to any of my degree. But I will this once restrain my self, and expect the combat till the Knight of the golden Image be brought well of his wounds, that my revenge may be the greater: For I mean to wage the fight with all four. Nor would I have you repute my words in vain; for I have other times done the like, against an hundred better than the best of them. Whereunto Don Brianel made answer.

Dost thou confirm my former speeches in so long prolonging this fight, daring say thou wilt do it against them all knowing, us to be such Knights, that will not suffer one another to enter the fight with such advantage? Then the Soldan commanded them all silence, saying: that the King of Cyprus accusing three knights, the like number must be against him: to wit, the King and his brethren that shall agree thereto. Be it as you shall command (said the King) and my two brothers shall accompany me, though more willing I would have had this combat my self, against three, four, or more, that they might thereby see how little I esteem of them.

Then the Soldan again commanded silence to be kept, and called the two Lords of Armenia & Tessifanty, with other Lords to council, touching the confirmation of the challenge, which being ended, they returned, and commanding the Knights and Gyants to attend, he said: Having consulted concerning the accusation made by the King of Cyprus, against the Duke Alfiron, the Knight of the Golden Image, and my Daughter, we have found he may lawfully do it, being as he is the mightiest of kindred that Don Gallaneo hath. And moreover, because the Duke himself is accused, he may not in person enter the combat: and so much for the Knight of the Golden Image.

Therefore it behoves you, Duke, to find a Champion to undertake this battel for you, seeing the Prince Arsileo doth it

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for the Knight of the Golden Image, & his companion for my daughter, and it must be forthwith.

Now though the Duke seemed outwardly displeased, being forbidden the combat in person, yet was it not so: for he greatly feared the Giants forces: Nevertheless he answered the Soldan in this manner. Seeing I must seek a Champion to defend my right, grant me some time (dread Soveraign) to do it. I give you said the Soldan, twelve days, wherein look to it, and consider on all things you shall need, that after, you complain not I have done you insustice. Then was the Princess Persiana sent for, that she should agree that the same Knight should be her defender. On this message went the Kings of Armenia and Tessifanty, and also to bring her, who acquainted her with all they had therein laboured, according to her request, and that the King of Cyprus being come to the Court, had not accused her alone, but also the Knight of the Golden Image, and the Soldan sent for her, to see if she would allow the adventurous Knight for her Champion. Whereupon being conducted to her Fathers presence, she prostrated her self before him, but he sternly looking on her, said: Consider Princess on the answer you must make before the King of Cyprus. She answered, she knew not his demand,: then had she it reiterated: Whereunto she replied, I know not What I shall answer to such a false and unsust request, and most untrue suggestion: but since you also joyn with me the Knight of the Golden Image, let him answer both for himself and me, to whom I commit my life, honor, right, and justice. we sent not for you to this end (said the Sophy) for the Knight of the Golden Image must not combat himself; but see if you will have the adventurous Knight defend your cause or no. I care not if he do (replied she) and yet I think he would willingly accept it, having all right and justice on his behalf, defending the innocency of a distressed Princess: And I beseech the immortal Gods, I may live to acknowledge and gratifie this his great courtesie.

To this (replied Don Brianel) your self (divine Lady) having so great justice to defend your innocency, maketh me the debter for this high favour, whose grace hath decreed to lay the confidence of so great a charge, on so mean and undeserving a Knight, whose

whose service for this honour is in perpetual bond to your graci-ous Highnes. Upon the end of which spæches, the gages were on either side accepted, and the day of battel assigned to be twelve days after.

The Soldan commanded both the Duke and Princes to be guarded in several strong Towers: and turning to the King of Cyprus, instantly requested him to lodge in his Palace untill the battail were past. The King easily condescended thereto, having already purposed, that if he remained Victor of the Fight, to re-quire the Soldan to pardon his daughter, and give her him with the Kingdom of Antioch as his right, being next heir to Don Gallaneo, for which cause he remained there, where the Soldan greatly honoured him.

The Prince Arlileo, Don Brianel, with the Kings, Dukes, and Earls, returned to the Dukes Palace, to tell Don Bellianis the order taken: and entering where he was, they found him now somwhat better than they before had left him, to whom they then declared all that had passed betwæn them and the Sol-dan, and how the day of battel was assigned, and that the Duke had no Champion for himself, and how they had accepted the combat in his and the Princes Persiana's name, expressing also the great fiercenes of the Gyants, particularly describing the deformed features of the King of Cyprus, protesting they had never sæn the like. Don Bellianis conceiving an extream rage, hearing that discourse, and how the Soldan would not permit him to the combat at such a time, wherein he was reputed a traytor, wherewith being almost besides himself, with unre-strained fury said, What? thinks the Soldan this shall be suffe-red that he hath ordained, and that with so great maliciousnes against the Law of arms, his desire shall be fulfilled? No, the powers divine will not permit it. And therewithall he rose and sate upon his bed, and in all haste called for his cloaths. The Damsels sæing him thus determined, intreated him not to do it, which he would not, but in all haste made himself ready, re-sisting all their requests, and also the Princes Aurora's, and commanded that none should accompanie him, save the Princes there present, that led him by the arms lest he should fall. But a little after, the Princes Florisbella's Damosels followed him,

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in which manner they went through the City, until they came to the Soldans Palace, who being seen and known by the common people, said one to another, viewing him so faint and weak. Behold here the Knight, which overcame the Knights of the unhappy bridge, and that took the Dukes part in the last journey. Many followed him to know the cause of his so going in such ill disposition, who being at the Palace gate, sent the Soldan word he was come to speak with him. When it was so told the Sophy, he was at table, accompanied with the King of Cyprus and his brothers, who understanding he was there, commanded he should be admitted to his presence.

Is this the Knight of the Golden Image (demanded the K.) whome I come both to accuse and challenge, for the treachery he committed by the death of my dear cousins. This is he (replied the Soldan) and do assure you his peer the sun shines not on, to equal him in strength and valour.

That may be (said the King) among such as himself: and it were a blot to my honour, to make any account of a hundred such as he. You wrong your self to think so (answered the Soldan) for if he should enter in the fight, I would not for the world assure you of the victory: and therefore I ordered what I did. Now you have told me so (said the Giant) it behoves me in any wise to crave the Combat against him, for if I should not, I am for ever dishonoured. I will have no more words hereon (said the Sophy) for in doing otherwise I should not be revenged on him and the Duke as I desire. The King disdainfully laughed at his words, and said. If the others that in this battel shall enter, were as you make him, yet should my will be accomplished: But since you will have it otherwise, I yeld unto you. Thereon (said the Soldan) give me your hand and word, not to accept at this time any battel against him. I promise you so to do (said the Giant) though it be to my lasting blame.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

What speeches passed between the Knight of the Golden Image and the Soldan, and how he was stayed in the Palace till the end of the Battel.

DOn Bellianis being before the Sophies presence, shewed no kind of duty, thinking that one of his state, & pretending such a challenge should rather seem stern & fierce, than humble & mild, though his weakness through the grievousness of his wounds was so great, that no Knight under the cope of heaven was able with such patience to endure half the pain that he perforce sustained, which notwithstanding, with a clear voice that he might be heard of all the assembly, dissembling his sorrow as much as he could, said.

I am (most mighty Lord) forced to come to your presence in this manner as you see, by hearing certain things that here have ben debated in prejudice of my honor & reputation, which most exceedingly have augmented the pain & grief of my great sickness: for which cause I fear I shall not be able to utter the imaginations of my pensive heart, with so great decorum & reverence as appertaineth to so high a personage. And I protest I had not hither come, but presuming on the equalness of thy justice. The Soldan seeing him in such distress commanded him ere he further proceeded, to sit down, a Chair being brought, he humbling himself for that courtesie, sat him down, being in such case, that he had like a thousand times to have sounded as he stood, through the great debility of his body. But drawing strength from his never fainting courage (seeing that Fellistone the fierce gazed on him) resting astonished at his great monstrousie turned to the Soldan with these words. If according to the justice of my cause, most mighty Lord, committed to the administration of those men, to that end placed by the immortal Gods on this terrestrial ball, promising large guerdons, in their future life of everlasting happiness, if with equity & right, they execute the function of so high comanding powers, whereunto the spacious Territories of your vast Empire binds you, you lok into this whole matter, searching the true ground thereof, not suffering the unbridled passion of base partiality, to bind the eyes of your admiring judgment, which most often is wont to obscure, & utterly with ignominy, besmears

the magnanimity of the noblest minds. Then I cannot but greatly marvel for what reasons you have so far proceeded in my affairs, seeing my self endeavoured with the utmost of my strength to shew my prostrate service to your highness; whose gentle regard might have been the cause that the least reason proceeding from your royal self, should have contentedly satisfied me at your Command. And I vow by the Immortal Gods no reproach should have scandaliz'd your mightiness, nor any injurious infamy stain'd the honor of your state, if my self had been first heard, and my consent granted to the assigned combat. For in my judgement it is against natural reason, that I being willing to defend the truth, (whereof my own heart only can bear witness) another altogether ignorant thereof, should in my cause indanger his sweet life. Touching what I cannot see, nor yet conceive in what foundation you should build your rash decree, to suffer the accusation of the Duke & the Princess your Daughter, who in no respect could be partakers, nor counsellers in what is past. For if I slew Don Galseo, I did it because he treacherously would have done the like by me, that was then altogether suspicionless of any such treason, which fact made me after verifie my suspicion, seeing in what peril of their lives Don Gallaneo endangered my companions in the Tourny, that forced me to shed his blood as he would have done theirs. Of which action, I should then rather have hoped for a more large guerdon for this good deed, than now to procure new combats; for it were high dishonor to your high name, that such as he, inured to treasons, treacheries, and villanies, should be accounted the son of so great a Monarch, having not only used such as love practices against strangers, as the Emperour Don Bellaneo, but also against his own friends.

Wherefore you may most certainly believe, my self being now informed of the truth, I have understood, that he left all his knights in the same fight, whereby they were all slain, whilest he most cowardly fled with his cousin Don Galseo. And moreover he was a traitor against your self and dignity, in thus perswading you that the Emperour was dead, or by him mortally wounded, that he could by no means escape death, who at this present both liveth, and is in perfect health; wher of fearing to be accused by me and my companions, that were hereof assured by a certain

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adventure, he procured our deaths: mine in the Dukes Palace by Don Galfeo, while he also did the like of my companions in the Tourney, where if he received his condign deserts through so pitiles death, his be the loss: wherefore since there is none can better bear Testimony of this truth than my self, not only against the Knights here present, accusing me, but also against all those which shall challenge me hereof, I will ten days hence answer it them in field, and approve it on their steel plumed burgonets: neither will I hereupon (whatsoever may befall me) deny them the combat, wherein I will make them know the great treacheries which they would have used against me. And if you shall refuse to do me this justice, assure your self I am a man able more strictly to require it at your hands: For the Eternal powers of the Heavenly and Earthly Orbs, have not infused so little courage in my uncoloured heart, that any fear but theirs should daunt my mind: where he ended his speech, not able to proceed any further.

The Soldan all this while stood gazing on him with great admiration, in his doubtful breast revolving many things, saying to himself, that his like for courage he never heard of, and greatly wondred who he should be that in such open terms durst presume to defie him to his face, and in his own Land. But as a man not able to restrain the reins of his passion, wanting the chiefest thing well and justly to judge of matters, shaped him this unbeseeming answer, holding the King of Cyprus by the hand, that willingly would have first replied. Think not, knight of the golden Image, that in what is done, you have received any dishonour: For it is not lawful you should enter combat in your proper cause: For were it good or bad, you would (howsoever it might happen) procure the good success of your pretension; for I am perswaded you fight by Inchantment, seeing the Knights of the unhappy bridge were not able to endanger you. And therefore is it reason none be admitted in battel against you: and concerning the rest of your threats, you shall do what you may, if the time will permit you. For in vain the Gods have made me Archruler over so many territories, if I should not accomplish the utmost of my will. In which season I will have you remain in my Palace, untill the good or bad success of the combat be by tryal known, that according thereunto my pleasure may be fulfilled to the full.

But the King of Cyprus being very big swoln with such extream pride that he was ready to burst, said to Don Bellianis with so hideous voice as if he would swallow him down alive. Great is thy desperate madness, Knight of the Golden Image, that I know not where thou should'st be born: For with my only sight I was wont to terrifie others both mightier, & in courage hardier than thou, and now thinkest thou to escape unpunished? I assure thee, that if the end of the battel, consisted in nought else, but with the first encounter of my Lance, to bring thee to such extremity, that thou never shouldest be more able to enter any other fight: whereby also we should after eschew the Soldans judgment in this case, thou shouldest thereunto be admitted. But because thou being convicted with the treasons thou hast committed, he determineth otherwise to chastise thy insolency, and so hath suspended thee from the battel.

I have no great need to attempt it (replied Don Bellianis) for I am sure thou shalt have to do with such Knights, and when the combat is ended it shall be publickly seen, that I am not of condition like thy treacherous cousins.

But I desired with my own person to rid thee of the great doubt that thou art in. And after to require account of the outrage thou offeredst to two damsels of my company, upon whom thou did'st shew part of thy consanguinity with the traytor Don Gallaneo.

All this Don Bellianis uttered, the more to enrage the enraged Giant, to make him accept the combat with him, though he needed not to spur a forward horse: For he was impatient to see himself upbraided with such opprobrious taunts, in presence of that Royal assembly, but he had as is afore mentioned, promised the Soldan to the contrary, who fearing they should attempt more than words, said to Don Bellianis.

Hereon Knight talk no more, for what is decreed shall be executed. Be it as you have said (answered he) but by the way, remember the great injustice you offer me. The furious Soldan would not answer him, but by his commandment he was committed to a strong Tower, and most surely guarded, leaving with him the damsels of the Princess Florisbella to cure his wounds.

Arsilco & Don Brianel, fearing by their speeches to add fewel to the

the kindled fire, said nothing but desiring the day of combat were come, returned to their lodgings, sending straight ways for the knights they before had sent to the wood, whose help did afterward greatly avail them. The Soldan remained in his Palace very glad, thinking to execute both the Duke, and the Knight of the Golden Image, and likewise quieted the King of Cyprus, that much importuned him to suffer Don Bellianis to enter in the combat, alleaging he might better to his content be revenged that way for all his treacheries.

CHAP. XXIII.

How Don Bellianis disguised, issued out of the Tower. What happened him with Don Contumeliano of Phœnicia, and how he returned unknown into the City.

ALl necessary preparations being ordered against the day of the famous Battel, ten days were past of the appointed time, and yet the Duke had not nor could find any, that would in his behalf undertake that combat, which extreamly grieved him, yet the magnanimity of his couragious heart permitted no outward shew thereof. No less was the sorrow that the beauteous Persiana sustained, continually beseeching her Gods, not to suffer her honours to wrack, nor the downfal of her Maidens fame, through want of a Champion to maintain the justice of her cause,

On the other side, the great anguish of mind that Don Bellianis conceived, cannot be exprest, which was so grievous that his Damosels could by no means diminish, nor himself could find no cõfort for his troubled fantasies: but at length he so recovered his weak strength, that he was able to walk about his chamber, seeing hĩself in disposition to buckle on his armor: And certainly had he but it, and his sword, he had broke forth among the strongest watch that guarded him, which in the day time were about 30 mẽ & in the night that number was doubled. In the mean time he used to send one of the Damsels to know if the Duke had got any to fight in his quarrel, and when he heard of none on whõ he might trust

truſt ſo weighty a charge (though he had many good and valiant Knights) by reaſon of the fierceneſs of the King of Cyprus, and his brothers, his grievous paſſions were redoubled: One of his damſels that accompanied him, by name Floriana, daughter to the Duke of Tuniſia, being Lord of many countries under the Soldan of Babylon, which was the chiefeſt & beſt beloved of the Princeſs Florisbella. The other was daughter to the Earl Cellanea, named Perſiana. But the firſt ſaid to Don Bellianis, the ſorrow of my grieved heart is ſuch (renowned Sir) to ſee the courſe of theſe things, that I cannot in words ſhew it, as alſo ſeeing you cannot uſe your valor to remedy them, wherein your life & honor do depend. Wherefore revolving many things in my troubled thoughts, have in the end, affying on the rare courage of your admirable ſtrength, though now made weak by treacherous deſigns & ſiniſter occaſions, deviſed this as the laſt refuge to redreſs theſe wrongs; & this it is. You know that we oftentime go forth unſuſpected or miſtruſted of the guard. Now may you diſguiſed & atired in the apparel of one of us, having no hair on your face, get abroad, where you may eaſily procure horſe & armor, & do what you elſe think beſt, returning unknown unto the Palace, and there undertake the combat, & in the mean time I will remain in bed, faining to be you, ſuffering none to ſpeak with me, ſaying I am extream ſick. Don Bellianis was ſo joyful with this unlooked & unthought of remedy, as hardly it may be expreſſed; hoping thereby not only to aſſure his own life, but alſo his companions in that manifeſt danger, though he nothing doubted their valor; & embracing the Damſel ſaid. Pray unto the Gods (my good Floriana) that theſe troubles may have their deſired end, & then I promiſe you this great care ſhall be fully gratified to your content. There is no reaſon (replied ſhe) why you ſhould bind your ſelf to any ſuch gratification, without deſert, ſeeing my duty bindeth me to your perpetual ſervice, & ſo think not much of this I counſel'd you. And I intreat you govern your ſelf well abroad, for being yet weak, you might fall into ſome other greater danger. Whereupon ſeeing the night approach, he put on Floriana's apparel, wherewith he became ſo fair, that the Damſels not a little wondred to ſee him ſo beautiful, & Perſiana cryed out. Is it poſſible, Oh Gods, ſuch beauty ſhould be on earth? you had been better reſerved it to glory by your imperial Thrones, unleſs here you

you will inhabit, to manifeſt your great Powers among us.

And truly (ſir Knight) ſuch beauty was never ſeen but in the Princeſs Floriſbella our Lady Miſtreſs: and well is it for all Knights you are not of our ſex, elſe ſo many would by you periſh, as by the Princeſs our Miſtriſs, whoſe only ſight killeth (though not out-right, yet with living death,) like the murthering eyes of a ſlaying Baſiliſk. Is her beauty ſo admirable to cauſe ſuch alterations in men? (demanded he.) You cannot believe, nor we ſet down (ſaid Floriana) the greatneſs thereof. And becauſe you may know I wear with me ſo great a beauty as yours, I will ſhew it you, which I continually carry with me.

And ſo ſhe pulled it out of her pocket, and gave it him, which he ſtraight knew to be the ſame that was portraied on his Shield, though his was more lively, and for all he viewed it continually, did ne'er ask whoſe it was, imagining no ſuch perfection could be on earth, and that Bellona had only ſet it there for a ſhew; Then ſuddenly was he wounded to the heart, with the unreſiſted dart of all-conquering Love, & not able to withſtand it, was inflamed with the fire that laſted all the days of his life, ſurpriſed with ſo great deſire to ſee the ſubſtance of that ſhadow, that ſtraight he would depart thither, leaving all things he had then in hand unfiniſhed.

In this new accident was he a good while, not knowing how to reſolve himſelf, ſave in fixing his longing eyes on that dainty picture, having no more colour than in a dead man; which the damſels ſeeing, and thinking his riſing had cauſed this alteration, held him by the arms, leſt he ſhould fall; he recovering and feeling himſelf touched, through ſhamefacedneſs died his face with ſuch a vermilion bluſh, that he redoubled his fairneſs, to whom they ſaid. What extraordinary paſſion did you feel? which made us fear ſome new peril had befallen you in that ſtrange chance? Whereto he replied. A ſudden grief ſurpriſed me on my left ſide, ſo ſtrongly, that it almoſt benumb'd my veins, and reft me of my vital ſenſes. If any wound be the cauſe thereof (ſaid they) uncloath your ſelf, and we will ſee it. It ſhall not need (anſwered Don Bellianis) for I ſhall ſtay too long. But I pray you give me this Picture, that ſo much reſembles another I have. It is at your command, replied the Ladies, but take heed you loſe it not: for if you do, it ſhall coſt you yours.

Then

Then he taking his leave of them, leaving Floriana abed in his stead, went out of the Chamber, to descend the tower, and by the way he met the Kings of Armenia and Tellisanti, that came to visit the Knight of the Golden Image; whom he knowing, said in presence of most of the guard: Your Majesties may not enter, for the Knight of the Golden Image is a sleep, and so sick, that I fear he will hardly escape the danger of his wounds; and I come to tell these Knights that for a few days they should suffer none to visit him, for it would be very troublesome to him, and now I will go to know what the Duke determineth about his cause.

The Kings hearing this would go no further, but charging the guard to let none enter his Chamber returned back, leading Don Bellianis with them, whom they knew not through the obscurity of the night, and had it not been his pensive and sullen melancholy, they could not but have known him by the tallness of his body, although he stoped as much as he could, and being all without the Palace, the Kings would accompany him to the Dukes Tower, but he thanking them for that courtesie, would not suffer them, and so departed going alone, and being nigh the Dukes Palace, he espied his companions talking with many Knights, and because he would not be known, he took another by-way, which led him without the City-gate, through which he went till he came to a fair grove of Trees, somewhat out of the high-way, where under a spreading beech he lay till the Moon began with her light to shew her self, there was he surprized with the remembrance of the beauty of the most honourable Princess Florisbella, which he so contemplated, that he was carried away with the deep imaginations of her divine perfections, that he knew not whether he were in Heaven or in Earth, and drawing forth the Picture that the Damsels had given him, with heart-breaking sighs, he uttered these words proceeding from the bottom of his love sick Soul. O Divine and most Angelical beauty of the absolutest Princess living on this massy Orb, unhappy was the hour wherein I heard thee named, and more unfortunate, when my eyes were captivated in the admired sight of thy pictured beauty, for seeing the sole shadow of thy nominated rareness, hath the power to drown me in heavy soul-tormented passions, what then will the substance of thy immortal deity do, when the fruition of that sight shall rob me of my

my ſoying ſenſes. Then muſt I only call and continually cry for death, as chiefeſt anchorage and remedy of my wounds, & with my life to end theſe extream and intollerable ſorrows. But fool that I am, where may I obtain more glory than to nouriſh ſuch conceits or happy fortune then poſſeſſing this ſight-burthening torment, if I do not altogether deſpair at the curing ſalve, for my mortal wound. Oh (wiſe Bellona) not without cauſe didſt thou bid me come to the Soldans Court, and remember me, I ſhould not there, in my greateſt affections, looſe the reins of my highcourage. But who is he, that is able to do ſo, having no ſtrength to counterpoize my griefs, nor cure for my oppreſſed heart, being ſo far removed from the cauſer of my torments, whoſe ſupream thoughts cannot deign to bend their favour on ſo mean a Knight, and if they did, how ſhould I merit and obſerve them, by conjoyning both deſires in one, when the large continents of the ſpacious world do not contain two greater enemies than hers and my father, or where is there a greater difference of laws, and religion, than betwixt them: whereby I may not only deſpair of remedy, but live perpetually the diſgracefulleſt Knight that in this age ſurviveth. Oh Floriana, when, or wherein, did I ſo much injure thee, that thou ſhouldeſt on me ſo cruelly be revenged: and hereat fixing his eyes on his imaginary ſorrows, and unable to reſiſt the violence of the ſudden paſſion, fell in a trance, wherein he continued, till a Knight arrived there, which travelled that way, by the light of the then ſhining Moon, who ſeing that Lady lye with the picture in manner rehearſed, alighted and tied his horſe to a tree, and going to her, took her in his arms, uſing thoſe remedies that he knew to recover, if ſhe were not dead, which he feared, ſeing her ſtir neither hand nor feet.

Don Bellianis, with what was done unto him returned to himſelf, greatly amazed, to ſee that Knight there, thinking he had heard his complaint. But the knight reſted no leſs aſtoniſhed to ſee his excellent beauty, that he could not utter one word, yet with a trembling voice, cauſed by ſudden fire of love that burnt his heart, ſaid, What great miſfortune hath befallen you (moſt fair Lady) that in this ſolitary place ſhould put you in ſuch extream Anguiſh: I ſwear by the order of Knighthood I have received, with the uttermoſt of my power, even with my death, to procure your

present remedy. Therefore I beseech you, courteous Damzel to tell it me, for I shall account my self more happy to be imployed in your service, than to be created Emperour of Constantinople, seeing your rare beauty binds all the world to your service, no more being therein to desire, than to live and dye at your command.

The Prince Don Bellianis heard his speech to the end, and smiled in himself to see the Knights deceit, although those words added a greater flame to his burning fire, with remembrance of his Mrs. And he determine to answer him according to his opinion, that his own purpose might not be discovered, though he should thereby more torment the Knight, greatly delighting in such discourses, hoping himself to use them, if at any time he saw the Princess Florisbella, and therefore replied thus.

Truly (sir knight) although my misfortune were not for no other cause than now to joy your presence, I should have taken it for my greatest consolation: And I think my self most happy that the Gods have permitted me, to arrive in this place to enjoy the promise which you of your meer bounty and courtesie have so liberally made. For my chance is the strangest, that ever you heard: and therefore it behoves me, that you grant me a boon, nothing disadvantaging your self thereby. The Knight joying more thereat than at any thing in all his life answered. Command me what you will (fair Lady) for you need not demand any thing by intreaty. Then before we proceed any thing further (said Don Bellianis) unclasp your helm and after you shall know what I require. The knight straight did it, and sitting down (having hitherto stood) discoursed together of diverse things, chiefly touching amorous matters. Don Bellianis was greatly pleased with his talk and the more to ease his own grief. It is needless to describe the features of the Knight, being of a gallant disposition and young, not five and twenty years of age, of whom Don Bellianis demanded his name, whereto he said he would do it, if she would accept him for hers. Don Bellianis said I will, if that will please you, and so forward with your discourse. Then know (my dear Lady) my name is Don Contumeliano of Phœnicia, son and heir to the King of that Country: and by another name am called the solitary knight, because I profess nothing that better agrees with my conditions, than to wander through solitary and unknown places, shunning the habitation of populated

Cities,

Cities, and Towns, thinking thereby that the blind God of love would have no power over me, and therefore would I not this night lye in Persepolis: but he hath at his pleasure revenged himself on me with your gracious sight: whose speedy remedy if I want, will leave me altogether breathless: The hearing of your state (most noble Prince) hath highly contented me (said Don Bellianis) and yet rest I discontented, suffering the like torments that you through such a passion for procuring to avoid the cause of such effect have been this night so plagued with Loves all-conquering power, that now I feel the force of his tributary pains. In this chat they spent the better two parts of the night, when Don Bellianis, being resolved to demand of the Prince, what he wanted for the combat, desiring that by no means his companions should know his intent, for he durst not trust them with a battel of such import, hoping also to obtain his request, said, I do desire you most honored Prince, that you will perform the promise you made me, which is this. I left not far from hence a Knight in an extream dangerous adventure destitute of an armour, weapons and horse, to perform a most notable combat, and were it not (sir knight) that I also promised to procure it him, I would not now presume so much to injure you as to request them. But believe me, if I live, I will to your content gratifie this good turn. For at this time can I not do otherwise, being requested by that Knight to get him them. And seeing it hath been my hap to meet with you, I do beseech you to make me so happy by your gracious grant, promising if I revive to morrow at this time to return them, and this is my bon and your promise. The Knight was very joyful to have occasion to pleasure his mistress, especially expecting so great a benefit as she promised, cared not whether he ever should have them again although they were the richest in the world (saving Don Bellianis's.) They were of colour yellow, rarely ingraven with curious work & set with rich Orient pearls, whose inestimable worth cannot be valued. In his shield was pictured a mighty mountain, with a Knight lying under an Oak, with his hand under his cheek leaning upon the shield, staring and gazing on the cruel God of Love, sitting on the top with his bow and arrows, drawn so naturally, that every loker on might easily believe it to be alive. And he said to Don Bellianis. Fair Mrs. seeing all my heart is yours, what need you more? have command

all I else possess as your own, for my armor and my self rest at your disposing: more desiring to undertake that combat under your service, than with my armor to pleasure you. But seeing you will have it so, stay while I call my Page that is not far hence, knowing I would not go into the City this night: whereupon sounded he a Horn, whose value was more than might be thought. The force of which blast was heard through all the City, wherewith he made a certain sign, at which the page straight came, who seeing his master accompanied with that Lady, greatly marvelled, knowing it to be against his condition, & alighting off his palfrey, said, What wonder is this (sir) to see you in such a place with so fair a Goddess in your company? I fear she hath of purpose descended the heavens to penetrate the flinty walls of your adamant heart, seeing on earth there is none that could do it. It greatly pleased the Knight to hear his page praise his Mistress so highly, and commanded him, saying: Give me my other apparel (Bruneo) for this Goddess thou speakest off stayeth for me. Whereupon the page drew forth of a male the richest suit of apparel that ever Don Bellianis saw, It was all of a Ruby color, embroydered with many of those stones, and other of unvalued price: and unbuckling his armour gave it him, and put on those garments: Don Bellianis admired and highly commended the Knights gallant liberality, and the more that deceitful love should make him so kind; & desirous to requite his bounty, said, Most noble and renowned Prince, I do accept the gift of your lent armour, and for the same do promise ere twenty days do pass to remedy your grief to your great profit, and so require no more of me. For this promise the Prince knæled to kiss his hands: Don Bellianis would not suffer it, taking him up in his arms & embraced him kindly, which exceedingly gladded his heart. And therewith did help him to mount on his horse, saying, You may (sweet mistress) sit without fear: for though my horse seemeth as he doth, yet he is so gentle and tractable as may be desired. I believe no less my good Lord replied Don Bellianis) and taking his armor bound in a cloath before him, and Don Contumeliano's sword in his hand (who took his Pages) said: I intreat you to enter the City to day, where you shall see your armor used, and after follow the Knight, for you shall find me in this place, and so taking leave departed through the thick grove, leaving him as a man that

firmly

firmly gazeth on some wonder, and rapt with admiring contemplation thereof, suddenly loseth the sight of his delightful object. So rested Don Contumeliano, who not knowing what to do, layd him down to sleep, till it should be time to enter the city, which he did, mounted on his pages horse; in which city he never had been, where taking his Inne, expected the hour to go to Court: where we leave him, to return to Don Bellianis, travelling through the wood as afore said.

CHAP. XXIV.

What happened to Don Bellianis in the Court, armed in Don Contumeliano's armour. How he accepted the Battel. His talk with the Princess Persiana before the fight, and what befel him in the same.

DOn Bellianis going through the wood (as is said) came at last to a cave where in winter the Shepheards used to withdraw themselves, which he seeing to fit his turn, alighted more easier than Don Contumeliano did mount him on horse back, and so went in, and straight put off Floriana's garments, and armed him as well as he could, having no help; which done, he hid his female Robes, covering them with some boughs, which he cut with his sword, that none that there should arrive might think them otherwise: and so took his way to Persepolis, at such time that the giver of all light began with his resplendent rays to clear the dusky sky, and chase the darkned clouds from the airy region, when the chirping birds, with their melodious harmony saluted the mornings uprising, whose varying notes and pleasing musick, struck such thoughts into the passionate Prince of his contemplative mistress, that he regarded not his way, nor knew not where he was, till he found himself at the City gate, which entring, he came to the lodging that Don Contumeliano had taken, who being at the door, presently knew each other, yet spake never a word: whereupon he took another horse, and followed Don Bellianis to the Pallace, to know the end of that adventure: by the way were greatly admired of all men, the one for the richnes of his Armour, and the other for the sumptuousnes of his Apparel (as afore is mentioned,) Don Bellianis lighted at the Court gate, and having none to hold his horse, Don Contumeliano said, give your horse to my Page, who

shall

shall look unto him: For though you know me not, yet am I bound to do you any service. Don Bellianis requiting his courtesie, did as he requested and said. Such favors (sir Knight) cannot but presage a happy succes to my enterprise. And taking him by the hand, passed into a long Gallery, where they sent the Soldan word of their coming, craving acces to his presence: which granted, they entred, and found him talking with the King of Cyprus, who then with his brothers began to arm themselves for the fight, highly rejoycing, imagining their enterprise ended, assuring themselves that five hundred good Knights were not able to withstand them in the field. And when they saw those Knights enter in so rich armor and apparel, with such gallant disposing, they much praised them. They being before the Soldan, kneeled on the ground, demanding his princely hands to kiss them, who courteously took them up, and embraced them, and said they might utter what they would, and what they came for: whereto Don Bellianis replied. Command (dread Lord) the Duke Alfiron to be sent for, and then you shall know what we require. The Soldan sent for him straight, who came guarded with a thousand armed men. And not knowing the cause of his sending for, was very sorrowful, seing that day to be the last of his prefixed time for the trial of his cause, and that he had got no champion to defend his right by fight. Don Bellianis seing him, with an audible voice, that all might hear him, said. Most mighty Sophy of Syconia, & imperious Soldan of this great Persian Monarchy, know I am called the solitary Knight, if my name have ever penetrated your ears, son unto the King of Phænicia, who wandring about the world in search of strange adventures, have by chance arrived in this your Kingdom, where I heard the occasion that the King of Cyprus, otherwise named the Gyant Fellistone the fierce, hath made against the Duke Alfiron the courteous, and other Knights of his company, as also against thy daughter the beauteous Persiana, touching the death of the Prince of Antioch, whom he saith they treacherously slue. I do well know the Duke Alfiron, (although his memory doth not comprehend any remembrance of his favors toward me) and am assured he would do nothing against the laws and duties of a good Knight. But to be brief, I am resolved to undertake and fight the combat for him, he hath none to do it & I intreat him to grant it me, for though I deserve not he should trust me

me with ſo great a charge, yet my indeavour and his juſtice herein ſhall ſupply my want. The whole aſſembly much admired him, judging he was of no little valor that durſt combat with ſo terrible and deformed Giants, though they mightily doubted his victory. The Soldan was ſore grieved, thinking every ſmall let to be great according to his deſire to ſee that matter ended as he would, and willingly would he give the City to be fully revenged on the Duke. Yet diſſembling his inward thoughts, ſaid, You may try (ſir Knight) whether the Duke will grant you the fight, and then do what therein you beſt may. Notwithſtanding I know not why you ſhould procure this combat, getting nothing but the loſing of your life. All ſhall be as pleaſeth the Gods (replied Don Bellianis.) The Duke hearing theſe ſpeeches, ſaid: I cannot hitherto call to mind (moſt excellent Prince) wherein my deſerts ſhould ſo bind you to ſuccour me in my greateſt need. But I do aſſuredly believe, the immortal Gods have ſent you becauſe they will not ſuffer ſo great villany to proceed further. And were this as an aulpicious token aſſuring me of your victory through your incomparable courteſie, & more valour, I grant you the fight, and perſwade your ſelf all right and juſtice you this day defend. I am ſo perſwaded (ſaid Don Bellianis) and therefore ſay no more. But who is your accuſer? The King of Cyprus ſtepped forth ſaying: I am he. Wherefore ſee if ſtill thou be reſolved. More aſſuredly will I now maintain it than at firſt (ſaid Don Bellianis) for thy preſence ſheweth there can be no reaſon nor juſtice in any thing thou attempteſt. The Giant inraged with theſe words, and ſeeming through choler to ſpit fire, intreated the Soldan to command the priſoner to be brought into the field: for being all armed they had nothing to ſtay for: Hereat Don Bellianis was ſomewhat moved, thinking it would be known he was not in the Tower. Many of thoſe Knights went for the priſoners, and entring Don Bellianis lodging, they found Floriana abed in his place: but her fellow was up, & had cloſed the curtain ſo cloſe that none could ſee who was abed. Who when ſhe ſaw the guard come in, ſaid very ſoftly to them. Go no further good Knights, for the Knight of the Golden Image lieth in the extream pain of his life. The Sophy (ſaid they) hath ſent us for him, to carry him to the field. See (ſaid ſhe) where he lyeth. But I beſeech you ſtir him not, & I will go with you to the Soldan, and ſee what he will

will command. Whereupon they went to the Sophy with her, who declared unto him in what case Don Bellianis was. The Soldan commanded he should not be molested, and that she should see him want nothing. He now needeth nothing but this (said she) and seeing the Knight that had undertaken the combat, she knew him to be Don Bellianis by his gallant demeanour, and the talnes of his body, and wondred to see him furnished with such rich armour: and returning to the Tower told it Floriana, who with her greatly rejoyced, assuring themselves, that Don Bellia. would obtain the victory: reasoning together, that he seemed to be yoked in the amorous bonds of their Lady, by that which befel him when they named her.

At this time was the Princess and the Duke conducted to the field, seeming very pleasant. The Princess, Don Brianel and Arsileo, were advertized how the Duke had gotten a Champion. They were glad thereof, because the imprisoned Knights might rest more contented, and secure of their good success, and so mounted on their horses. The King of Armenia did bear Don Brianels shield, and Arsileos was born by the King of Tessifanty. The Duke Gariano did bear one helm, and the Prince of Brandalia the other: and in this manner they were accompanied to the field, with the sound of many military instruments, whereat that time they met the Knight of the Golden Image, whose lance and shield were born by Don Contumeliano, whose gallant disposition every one admired, thinking he should be he whom in effect he was: and all they joyning together, most lovingly saluted each other, and entred the lists, where they alighted, within a Pavilion (prepared for them) till the Soldans coming, where Don Bellianis, had the buckles of his armor closer girt. There then also entred above ten thousand armed men, and in the midest of them they brought the Princess Persiana, and the Duke. The Princess was mounted upon a scaffold richly appointed for her, but the Duke remained among the guard, who spred themselves round about the yard, for the better assurance both of the prisoners and combatants. When suddainly the earth seemed to tremble & quake with the noise and sound of drums and trumpets that the Knights could not hear one another. The Knights came forth of their Pavilion (which was hard by the Princess) and mounted on horseback, to expect the coming of the Gyants, who then appeared in sight, But Don Bellianis seeing so many eyes

fixed

fixed on him, desirous to do no less than he was wont, set one hand on the pummel of his Saddle, and leapt therein not setting foot in the stirrop, and with the force he put thereto, the blood issued out of his armor from the wounds that were not yet whole, which seen of many, they counselled him to leave the combat, being so sore wounded. The Princess Persiana sent him word that he should come to her, for she would speak with him, which he did, where she intreated him to mount aloft. The gard seeing him go alone did not let him: Which was at such a time that the Princess Aurora arrived, wel accompanied, who was conducted to that scaffold. These two Ladies entertained each other with such courtesie, as belonged to their high states. And the Princess Aurora seeing that knight there, demanded why he was not called. To whom the Princess Persiana replied, she should straight know why, and so softly that none but they three might hear, said to him. By the life of that thing which you most love in this world (most noble Knight) and so the immortal Gods may bless you, with the everlasting glory of a most famous victory at this present, and most happy success to all enterprises and adventures you shall undertake, I do intreat you to declare your name, for either I am now blind, or I do certainly know you, having dreamed this night, that I was delivered by the hands of a Knight I greatly affected, and so would I know it (though I think it impossible you should be he) which you may assuredly do, knowing how it behoves me to keep it secret.

And here the History saith, that she indeed did dream that night, she was delivered by Don Bellianis: who made this answer. I cannot conceive (fair Princess) wherefore you should desire my name, having nothing less therein, but to increase your sorrow, yet know I am your Knight of the Golden Image, and so pardon me, for you shall know the rest hereafter. Wherewith he descended, lest he were suspected, though every one thought the Princess did but incourage him with the justice of her cause, who was advertised by Don Bellianis she should disclose that secret by no means, neither to his fellows, nor to any other living, and mounting a horseback the Gyants entred the Lists, with their helms on: whereat the Ladies were much astonished in seeing them, and in knowing him to be the Knight of the Golden Image, something fearing his life. because of the blood that issued from his old wounds, yet rested as-

ſured of the victory, marvelling how he ſhould get out of priſon & be furniſhed with ſo rich armour, & turning to the knights, he ſaw the Soldan marſhalling the field (being himſelf judge of the fight) and placing the knights one againſt another, and coming to the knight of the Golden Image, he ſaid, ſeeing him bloody through his armor. How will you enter in fight (ſir knight) being thus wounded? It is no matter (ſaid he) for this only am I knighted.

The Soldan urged it no more, but withdrawing himſelf commanded the ſignal of the fight to be given by the Trumpets; at whoſe ſound the knights with armed fury, in ſuch ſort made againſt each other, that they rather ſeemed ſo many ſuddain flaſhes of lightning, renting through the Ayry paſſage of the Heavens; then men and horſe met in the middeſt of the field, with ſo mighty encounters, as if ſo many pieces of Ordnance had bæn diſcharged.

Arſileo and Don Brianel incountred the King of Cyprus's two brothers, that all four meaſured their lengths on the earth, ſore wounded. Don Brianel having one foot hanging in the ſtirrop, that he could by no means riſe. Don Bellianis and the fearful Felliſtone, ſo cruelly met, that Don Bellianis ſhield was peirced, together with his arm, and the furious lance not reſting there, penetrated both armour and coats of male, where his arm was nayled with a peece of the ſpear to his breaſt, making there a wide wound, from whence iſſued infinite blood.

But Don Bellianis incountred the Gyant in the middle of his ſtæled ſhield, which alſo was pierced, with his breaſt-plate, and the ſhoke was ſo ſtrong, that the lance guided by ſo brave an arm, and the fury of ſo good a horſe, that therewith the King of Cyprus loſt his ſtirrops, and mæting body with body, & breaſt with breaſt, the deviliſh giant having nothing to ſtay his fæt, fel to the ground: Don Bellianis had done the like, if he had not gotten hold by his horſe neck. Who is able to expreſs the amazed wonder of the beholders, at that brave incounter, having never ſæn the like; that they raiſed a murmur among themſelves, with high praiſes honoring the extream valor of that knight, who ſeeing that it behoved him to loſe no time, was alighted off his horſe, when the King made toward him, more inraged than a fierce baited Bull. But firſt loking to his companions, perceived the adventurous knight to have one leg ſtill in his ſtirrop, and in great danger, becauſe his adver-

adversary was going upon him, intending to end his life, which easily without disturbance he might have done; wherefore seeing his friends sure peril, set apart his wonted courtesie, and ran with his horse against the Gyant, that he returned to the ground, and himself leaping from the saddle, went to help Don Brianel, which purpose was letted by the Kings coming, that thereby he was fain to stay, to prepare himself for the Gyants sudden blow, who raising his Battle-axe would have discharged it on his head. But the Knight of the golden Image, seeing he could not help himself with his left arm, by reason of the piece of lance that was in it, stepped aside, that the axe strook on the earth, and therein ran above a yard: and going upon the King, was unawares surprized by his brother that he overthrew, who gave him so cruel a blow on his Helm, that made him to bow to the ground, which made the rage so kindle in the knights breast, that very fire sparkled from his eyes, and like a hot chafed Boar, or hungry Lyon, bent to his prey, wounded the Gyant that had struck him, with so puissant a blow on the Helm, that he cut it in two, as if it had been of paper, sorely wounding his head, that he was like to fall, yet with the strength of the blow his Semitor fell out of his hand, resting so astonished, that he knew not whether he were alive, or dead.

But the Knights sword flew in two pieces; that only the hilt remained in his hands, to defend himself in such extream danger and of so puissant enemies as those. Who at that time had beheld the two Princesses, Persiana & Aurora, with the good Duke Alfiron, and the towred Damzels of the beauteous Princess Florisbella, that hence beheld the fight, had no need to seek elsewhere the pale colour of timorous death. For in their faces was it so perfect to be seen, that no Painter ever did better draw it in variety of colours, which sight did so terrifie the dolorous Ladies, that they desired no longer life than it might be guarded by the knight of the golden Images safety.

But the good Prince of Phœnicia, was there like to dye for very sorrow & anguish of mind, seeing all that evil had hapned through the weakness of his defective sword, and cursing himself, thought his Mistress would for ever abhor him for that cause, which would be the loss of the best knight that ever put on armour. Yet hitherto Don Brianel could by no means get his foot loose, but

with the strength that he set, drew his horse upon all his leg, that the very pain thereof had almost killed him, only the Soldan rejoyced at this disastrous accident, thinking hereby to effect his desire: The Cyprus King was so highly glad, that hoisting his axe aloft, cried aloud, this blow shall execute my will. The Prince Arsileo that in such state saw his companions, would have gone to help them, but his adversary perceiving it, let fall his semiter, and flung himself upon him, who unable to shun it, did the like, striving with their excessive strength to overthrow each other.

Don Bellianis though he saw himself without sword, and not able to help him with one arm, was not therefore danted with the fearful sight of present death, that he before him saw, but seeing the most fierce Gyant come towards him, flung with all his strength the piece of sword remaining in his hand, that lighting on his helm, the force thereof threw him backwards to the ground, & before his brother could remedy it (with admirable quicknels which the present danger did augment) he took up the semiter that he let fall, as is said, and leaving the fight at that stay, stepped to Don Brianel, and cutting the horse girts, set him on his feet.

The fierce King that then came upon him, gave him a blow on the head, which if it had not been given him unadvisedly it had cloven it in the middle, but not staying there, it descended on the shield, cutting it all overthwart, and falling on his thigh parting all the Armour it opened his flesh most piteously. Don Bellianis feeling his wound, struck the King sideling with the heavy semitez, that if he had not warded the blow with his shield, it had clean cut off his leg, yet it threw the shield in two pieces to the ground together with his hand, and being close one to another, the King would have cast his arms upon him, but the knight leapt aside, unwilling to wrestle: whereupon they wounded each other most grievously that with their mighty strokes they sometimes bowed their heads to their breast, sometime they bended their knees, and set their hands to the ground, and the King wanting his left arm, it made him to roze like a chased Bull, that he scantly felt any of the Knights blows. Don Brianel seeing himself rid from his horse, drew his sword, making against the King, but he was stayed by his brother who met him with a heavy mace, which he had on his saddle-pummel, using it instead of his lose Semiter, and so piteously wounded

one

one another, that the adventurous knight was fain to help himself with his nimblenes, to avoid the Giants intolerable blow, having wounded him in many places. The like did the Prince Arsileo, who having let lose his adversary, laid close to it with their sharp swords with such admiration of the beholders, as if the universal judgment consisted in the victory of that battel, and none durst utter one word but with amazed gaze stared in one anothers faces to see those knights escape that great danger (whom a little before they accounted dead) by the meer courage and valour of the knight of the golden Image unparralel'd for haughty deeds of honoured Chivalry, and whom they so much esteemed. And returning to the grieved Princes, they knew not what to say, through conceived gladnes, and had much to dissemble it in time of sorrow: no les glad were the Ladies of the Princes Floris bella who for joy embraced each other, especially Floriana that with tears in her eys, said, Oh most unahppy maiden that I am, for I never gave worse counsel in all my life to any, than I did to this Knight if he here had died.

But his death should not have been without company: For in the instant my eyes had seen such a thing I would headlong have tumbled my self from off this tower, that it might be known with what sincerity and faithfulnes I counselled him. Peace said the other, for we shal see him straight victoriously triumph over his enemies, and therfore let us procure all necessaries, for to cure his wounds.

At this time all the Knights and Giants were besmeared in their own blood, that where they set their feet, they left their signs printed with the same, and so tired with wearines, having fought almost five hours, that they could scarce hold their swords in their hands.

The fearfull Fellistone almost with sweaty fury choaked, and tired, withdrew himself apart to breath, which grieved not Don Bellianis: who doing so, drew forth the piece of spear from his arm, that embrued in his blood stuck so fast that it put him in extream pain: and walking up and down, because their wounds should cool, they loked on their fellows and saw the venturous knight redouble his strength, through anger of his pause, where with he had brought the Gyant, (with hom he fought, having a mortal wound given him before by the Solitary Knight) to such pass that he could not long defend himself. Which when the King of Cyprus

did

did ſæ, he would with his Courtle-axe wound the Knight, that then he might incur great danger, being taken unawares, but at the inſtant the watchful Prince Don Bellianis perceiving it, being not far from the King, diſturbed that his purpoſe, puſhing him on his breaſt ſo ſtrongly that he recoiled back three or four ſteps, whereby they renewed their fight more fiercely and bravely, than in the whole day before.

But Don Bellianis perceiving that if the combat long continued he was like to faint through the infinite blood he had loſt, adventured himſelf to receive a blow of the Gyant. Which when he ſaw deſcending on him, commending himſelf from the bottom of his heart unto the Almighty to deliver him from that danger, he thruſt at the Gyant ſo bravely under his arm, that being there unarmed, and with ſuch exceſſive force performed, that his ſword ran into his fleſh up to the hilts, piercing his heart in the middle, wherewith he fell down dead. But he was by the Gyant cruelly wounded on the head, that he alſo fell down in a trance, which grieved every one, chiefly the Princeſs Aurora, that was forced to cry out. O immortal Gods why have ye ſuffered ſo great an evil: for without doubt the beſt knight that ever girded ſword is ſlain. But her ſorrow was turned to a general gladneſs, ſeing him amazedly riſe, and was going to aid his companions if he had not ſeen Arſileo at one blow cut off one of the Gyants legs, and with another his head. The like did Don Brianel, not regarding the Soldans cries, requiring him that he would not do it, for he yelded him vanquiſhed. Which done they in their hearts rendred immortal thanks unto the Almighty, for their victorious delivery from ſo unſpeakable peril; and with great love embraced the knight in the yellow armor, whom they imagined to be Don Contumeliano, yelding to him all the honor of the victory.

Whereupon (not expecting the Soldans command) the general aſſembly ſhouted out for joy, ſounding a numberleſs number of all manner of military inſtruments, running about the field for gladneſs, which cut the Soldan to the heart, having no patience to endure it.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

What the Knight of the Golden Image did after the battel ended: And how the Soldan commanded the Duke to be carried to prison.

SO soon as the Princess Persiana did see the Battel ended, with joy as every one may judge, descended the scaffold, and going to the knights that were talking together, she would have knæled before Don Bellianis, but he prevented it by doing so himself, very courteously, saying: You have no cause (most excellent Lady) to thank me, being bound to do more than this for the Duke Alfiron. But if you will, then (royal Princess) gratifie these Knights, whose valour hath so well defended your right, & justice; for my service is of no worth, but while it be shadowed under their haughty deeds. I will not (famous knight) said the Princess, extol the honour you have won in this battel with such dear loss of your blood, (besides the overthrow of such great treachery as was ordained against us) being more than an hundred knights might attain. And since you will not have me rest your debtor for this incomparable favour, speake to him for whom you undertook the combat, who is no less bound to you than I. So leaving him with the Duke, & the Princess Aurora, she embraced the other knight using betwixt them words of great kindness according to their state.

Don Bellianis leaving the Duke, went to the Sophi (that was returning to the Palace, having commanded his Daughter & the Duke to be returned to Prison) & being nigh him & followed by many Knights, said unto him. Since mighty Lord the truth cannot be more clear and manifest, I beseech your highness, command that the Princess Persiana, the Knight of the Golden Image and the Duke Alfiron may be set at liberty, their innocency being saved and confirmed by the happy success of this battel, which I intreat to be forthwith, respecting the great necessity we have of cure for our most dangerous wounds.

The Sophy that minded no such thing, replied: I do believe you know (sir Knight) I am not bound to what you said; for if they be cleared of Don Gallaneo's death, as you will have it, the Duke notwithstanding is not freed of his trespass committed against me, having resisted my will with hostile arms, which being so plain, I had no cause to put it in trial of battel, but reserve unto my self

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the punishment of that fault according as it deserves; therefore talk to me no more thereof, for I will do nothing more than I have said. Whereto Don Bellianis answered;

We expected no such usage at the hands of so great a Lord. I undertook the fight for all matters concerning the Duke, and if he be clear of Don Gallaneo's death, it follows then, that he is free of all other things whatsoever. Reply no more (said the Soldan) for I will have it so: Whereupon he commanded the Duke to be returned to prison, who straight was there conducted, himself going to his Palace, and would hear none speak: whereat Don Bellianis was like to burst for rage. Don Brianel and Arsileo requested him to go with them to their lodging to be cured: to whom he answered, I have no need of cure since the Duke remaineth imprisoned, and so I humbly take my leave, for I will depart the City.

Wherewith he left them in field, taking his way to the Town, only followed by Don Contumeliano. The Knights and the Princess Aurora, returning to their lodging, reasoned on nothing but on the Solitary Knight, whom they thought never enough praised, having by him received great help in the battel. I should not have believed said Arsileo, that the world contained such a knight as the Prince of Phœnicia. You did not see his deeds so well as I (replied Don Brianel) because you were busie in combat, and believe me he no more feared, being without sword than if he had been confronted with no foes, which if he had not broken he need none of our help. Thus talking together they laid themselves in their several beds, where they were cured, having many and dangerous wounds. The Princess Aurora, leaving them went well accompanied to the Palace, to see what was done in the Dukes liberty, where she found the Princess Persiana that for the words spoken by the Knight of the golden Image was set free, who received each other as their great love testified, and after sent to see what the Soldan did, who brought them word, he commanded the Dukes guard to be doubled, and that also he had sent the adventurous Knight word, commanding him, that since he would not at this intreaties spare the King of Cyprus brothers life, he should forthwith depart his Land, or else his life should pay the forfeit of his stay.

The Ladies greatly grieved, hearing this, demanded his answer, which was that he was contented to obey him within three days,

but

but he should regard that he did it against law and justice, which being so, he would revisit against his will, since he would not observe them the conditions of the Combat, and therefore he should prepare to entertain him, which indeed was so: for they determined to be revenged at full upon the Soldan, who was guarded in his Pallace with more than ten thousand armed men, to prevent all occasions of conspiracy against him.

The Kings of Armenia and Tellisanty spake with him, and intreated him not to break his promise, which they in his behalf had made unto the Duke. But he would not hear them.

Whereupon they went to the Dukes Pallace to visit the wounded Knights, where among them they laid the plot and manner how to free the Duke (as hereafter shall be shewen) which cost many lives and loss of infinite blood.

CHAP. XXVI.

What befel the Knight of the Golden Image, and Don Contumeliano, who being at the point of death, was succoured with the adventure of the desperation of Love.

DOn Bellianis having left his companions in field took the next way to the place from whence that morning he came, going out of the City gate at such time, that the darkness (through absence of the clear light, and day-resplending sun) overspread the face of the earth, giving place unto the watry brightness of Diana's beams, whose pale reflect increased the pain of Don Bellianis deep stars, as also with one memorating the excellency, and divine beauty of his (above all others) fair Mistress the Princess Florisbella, whose remembrance made him forget Don Contumeliano that followed him a little after, and being come to the wood, and seeing him come towards him, staid to talk together.

The Prince Don Contumeliano coming to him, said, Whither do you mean to go (sir Knight) so sore wounded, leaving the City where you might be cured. I have no need (answered the Knight) of any other thing but your sight (most excellent Prince) to heal me. The Prince wondred at these words, and thought by this, and by what he saw him do in the Pallace, calling himself by his name, that he was so counselled to do by his Lady the Damzel, to whom he lent his armor, but very courteously thanking him for his kind

ſpæches, thus ſaid: I cannot expreſs the great deſire I have, to know whom you are, thereby to ſee the end of the adventure which hapned to me ſince yeſterday at this time: which (by the immortal Gods I proteſt) I cannot comprehend. And tell me what is become of a moſt fair Lady to whom the laſt night I delivered thoſe Arms, whoſe moſt dear ſight, I only wiſh now to ſee. Follow me (moſt excellent Lord, replyed Don Bellianis) and I will conduct you where you deſire. So they went through thoſe træs, till they came to the Cave where Don Bellianis had left the Garments, and there both alighting on foot he went thereto amazing Don Contumeliano to think what ſhould be the end thereof) and finding the robes, ſhewing them to him, ſaid,

Know you (ſir) theſe? He looking on them, anſwered he did (having engraven in his heart all the tokens of his Miſtreſs) and that ſhe did wear them that deſerved the rule of all the world: and therefore tell me the reſt, for the more I look on them the more I marvel. Take off my helm (ſaid Don Bellianis) while the Damzel comes. The Prince Don Contumeliano did ſo, and gazing on his face, was ſtraight ſtricken into ſuch a trance, and reſted ſo amazed that he knew not what to ſay: and had not Don Bellianis caſt his arms about his neck, he had preſently fallen down to the ground: notwithſtanding he was in ſuch caſe, that the Prince was fain to ſit down, and take the Knights head on his knæs, while the Page went to ſeek for water out of a ſpring or fountain to caſt in his face.

But before he returned, Don Contumeliano a little recovered his loſt ſenſes, and with a deep ſigh ſeeming to ſend his ſoul after, complained in this manner.

Ah me, unfortunate and diſgraced Don Contumeliano, unhappy was the day thou determinedſt to ſee Perſepolis, ſeeing ſuch great diſaſters lay hidden in theſe herbs to enſnare thee. Oh deceit to drive me from deceit, how haſt thou manifeſtly ſhewed me the ſmal intereſt I have in the large dominions of ſole conquering love, being entangled in the deceitful ſnares of a Ladies garment. Ah me, how many years have I ſhunned habitable Cities, now to come and dye in this deſert wood? Oh renowned Knight the beſt that ever buckled armour, how little do I now eſteem your immortal victories; ſince you had the heart to captivate me with ſo cunning

ſlight

ſlight having committed no fault nor cauſe, nor given any occaſion to move you thereto, unleſs my ſtar-croſt hap procures my untimely fatal end. For if you needed my armour, why ſhould you ſeek ſuch means to require that of me, which I never could deny any, being thereunto bound by the order I maintain, unleſs you deſired the deſolation of my unlucky life. Which he no ſooner ended, but ſwooned again, in ſuch manner, that no remedy that Don Bellianis uſed could recover him, nor yet his Page that was returned, which trance was ſo vehement, that they judged him dead, which indeed he was not far from, being oppreſſed with ſo great an evil that he lay hopeleſs, his heart panting within his body, with his vital ſpirits ſtopt, that he could neither ſpeak nor breath, that with the intollerable pain and agony thereof he lay groaning and tumbling, expecting the laſt minute, as thoſe that for want of their natural heat and moiſture, without other diſeaſe dye. Which ſo grieved the Prince Don Bellianis, that the tears came down the eyes of that heroick knight, like ſtreams of flowing waters in ſuch abundance, as if his own dear Lady were in that caſe, and truly there could be no danger ſo great, which that Prince would not attempt, for the ſafety of that good Knight Don Contumeliano, rather than to ſee him ſo languiſh in that extremity: Thus lay they a good while judging him altogether dead, and Don Bellianis through grief and loſs of infinite blood, ſo faint, that he could not almoſt ſtir. Where there cometh toward them from among thoſe trees, a beaſt the ugliеſt and deformedſt that ever he ſaw, or in the world might be found.

This Beaſt was ſo horrible in the ſight, caſting fire out of her mouth, that for fear of her, Contumeliano's Page fell down almoſt dead. Don Bellianis as well as he could, roſe from the ground (which he could ſcant do) taking the Courtle-axe in his hand, which he got of the King of Cyprus his brother, and awaited her coming: whoſe furious paſſage making againſt him was ſo vehement, that ſhe tumbled down all the trees in her way, and being nigh him, ſtraight vaniſhed, leaving in her place a huge white Piller with a letter thereon, incompaſſed about with much fire. Don Bellianis amazed at what he ſaw, ſtepped to the Piller and took the letter, which opening, read to this effect.

To the Supreme and excellent Prince of Greece. The sage Bellona, thy great friend saluteth thee: Knowing by my art and skill which I continually use for thy sake, the great and mortal danger, which through by-means should befal the solitary Knight, and also thy sorrow and languishment, therefore moved me, to make thee know the manner of his recovery: Wherefore I send this letter by a messenger of mine, that the Piller of wonders might be manifested unto thee. Within this Piller thou see'st, shalt thou find his remedy, and therefore leave it not untried. Always remembring what I told thee in my lodging as briefly as I could, for therein all my labour is assured thee. I say no more but so rest thine, as thy self maist testifie.

Don Bellianis having read the Letter, rejoyced to see there was yet remedy for the distressed Prince, and so resolutely was casting himself into the huge fire to see what therein he could find. But before he could effect his purpose, there came toward him four valiant Knights, against whom preparing himself, there also at that time assaulted him four Lions, big & fierce, who with their wide mouths (as though they cast fire) embraced him, maugre all his strength, drew him into the same. He seeing himself in such peril, letting fall his axe would have drawn his dagger, which at his back he had, but his arm was held so fast, that he could not stir it, & turning to see what did it, saw it was a most beauteous Lady, whereupon the Lions and Knights all vanished. Oh God (said Don Bellianis) is this possible I see? Marvel not, Knight, at what you see (replied the Lady) letting go his arm, for this is called the Piller of wonders, though it be a long time, since any hath been seen, wherein many have found remedy for their despairing love, yet never ending the adventure. Wherefore with more reason it might be termed a despair of love. And so was it true as in the second part of this history shall be seen: for whose cause many died, not tormented with that deadly wound. And seeing for your companions remedy you here have entred, though it could not be seen but by a third person with you, you notwithstanding enjoy the secret thereof: and taking him by the hand went where Don Contumeliano lay at the last point of life: the Lady carried a kindled coal of the fire of the Piller, which she cast upon the breast of the Phœnician Prince, where-

wherewith he straight returned out of his trance, somewhat agast to see himself in that case, and going to rise, Don Bellianis with much gladness embraced him, saying, What is the matter (excellent Prince) for your infirmity hath greatly grieved us.

My evil hath been nothing, in respect of the great gladness (replied he) I conceive in knowing you, and since I am free of the last deceit, I intreat you of your special favour, to manifest it me, not hiding any of your acts. I am content (answered Don Bellianis) to please you therein, but thank this Lady, for your lives liberty.

Which he going to do, she suddenly returned through that fire leaving every thing, as afore.

What is this (my good Lord) demanded Don Contumeliano? Whereupon Don Bellianis discoursed that adventure, and how he being ready to breath his last, it appeared, called the desperation of Love, how he proved it, with what else hapned: And proceeding said, I know not (soveraign Prince) the occasion of your extream passion. Let us talk no more hereof (replied he:) for I assure you, as soon as I felt the coal of fire let upon me, I lost all that vehement dolour and agony: yet not so but that I shall always remember the deceit done me hard by the City Persepolis.

And so was it true, for still after when he saw the Knight of the Golden Image, his pulses and spirits would beat with alteration, like one struck with an uncouth fear. And I pray you let me know your name, with the causes of your other adventure.

My name (replied Don Bellianis) is the Knight of the Golden Image, which I am sure you never heard of, and so recounted the rest. how he came out of Prison in a Ladies garment, to undertake that combat, as is afore said.

Don Contumeliano greatly wondred when he knew that was the Knight of the Golden Image, of whom pasting through the unhappy bridge, he heard such wonders of, and greatly rejoycing to have met with such a Knight, said, I do now (Sir Knight of the Golden Image) altogether believe and confirm the high deeds published by you, and do render thanks to our immortal Gods, that have brought me to enjoy the fruition of your company, and so very lovingly embraced together, knitting betwixt them the inviolable knot of friendship, which all their life lasted, as the History mentioneth.

Don Bellianis was unarmed by Don Contumeliano's Page and his wounds by him dreſſed, and attired in Floriana's garments, which renewed the dying flames in the heart of the amorous Prince, and agreed together, that Don Contumeliano ſhould ſtay for him in a ſtrong City, forty miles from Perſepolis belonging to the Duke Alfiron called Bollera, appointing to be with him within thirty Days: wherefore embracing again each other, and taking their leaves, they went to ſee the Piller, to read the letters thereon, which by the light of the fire, there, Don Bellianis thus read.

The Piller of the wonders for remedy of the diſpairers in Love ſhall be henceforth manifeſted, where every one ſhall be remedied according to their need. And if in Love, he never have erred, or in arms been overcome, by the guardians here placed by the ſage Medea: he that ſo hath not been, ſhall not prove himſelf therein.

Well might I have hoped for remedy (ſaid Don Contumeliano) of the guard you here ſaw, if you had not been here. But I deſire to ſee the end of ſo great an adventure, and how it may be brought thereto: for I think the letters do not ſhew it. A little lower I think it doth expreſs the manner how (anſwered Don Bellianis) by him that through deſpair ſhall hither come. Then good cauſe have I to prove (replied Don Contumeliano) for I never hope for remedy. Don Bellianis greatly laughed at what the Prince ſaid. And ſo taking leave one of another, departed. Don Contumeliano putting on his own armour, taking the Giants Curtle-axe in ſteap of his ſword, took his next way to Bollera, where he found all the people very ſorrowful for the Duke their Lords impriſonment, who was of them greatly loved. He recounted to them what had happened in the battel, and how the Duke their Lord was already at liberty, whereat they were much joyed, and highly honoured him who remained there till Don Bellianis came, as hereafter ſhall be expreſſed.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

How Don Pellianis returned to prison, and what passed between him and the Ladies of the Princess Florisbella.

DOn Bellianis being departed from the Prince of Phœnicia, arrived in the City, when two parts of the night was past, & went till he came to the Soldans Pallace, not staying any where, though he greatly desired to know of his companions. And thinking to find all the people quiet he found them otherwise busied, and the Pallace guarded with ten thousand men, with many light torches. But he closely passing between them, had nothing said to him, thinking that he was some of the Princess Aurora's or Persiana's Gentlewomen: and going up to the tower, required the watch to let him in to visit the Knight of the golden Image: they thinking he was a woman, let him in, demanding why she had been all day abroad, the Knight being so sore wounded. I could do no otherwise (replied Don Bellianis) and thereupon entred his chamber, where Floriana and her fellow stayed for him: who seeing him come, Persiana ran to embrace him, so did Floriana, who casting a mantle over her did rise out of the bed. Don Bellianis seeing it, said, It behoves not (fair Ladies) you should bestow such favours on so mean a knight, especially in so suspicious a place, there is (say they) no place to be suspected where such a Knight is, deserving greater favors than those, even at the hands of the fairest Princess living. But leaving this let us cure you now, and tell us all that befel you abroad: and so making him unready they laid him abed, and by their hands dressed him. Which done, they gave him his supper, who eat it with a good stomack, having tasted no food in a day and a half before; and when they would have left him, he would not let them go, because he could not sleep, and so told them all his adventure from his departing. And when he spake of Don Contumeliano, they could not stand for laughter.

I am much glad of your success (said Floriana) because you shall not think us fools of what we have said of your beauty, whereby you may imagine the greatness of our Lady the Princess Florisbella, and now you may render to us her counterfeit, for you no more need it. Let me yet keep it (gracious Damzel) for that I have not yet coated it with the: in my Shield, to see which is more natural:

natural: for the meaning I know is all one. And tell me the reason why the Soldan did command the Prince Perianeo to depart his dominions, which the Princess Aurora was the other day telling me, but she was interrupted by a sudden occasion, and since I have had no time to know it: We have not effectually learned it (said she) but it is thought the Soldan imagined he was in love with the Princess: and lest he should attempt any thing against her honour, commanded him to leave the Kingdom, being the valiantest Knight then known in the whole universal world.

What loss had there been (said Don Bellianis) if he had been married to her, being so good a Knight and so great a Prince. In faith none replied she) for possessions, or any thing else she should have been given to any, he well deserved her. But we thought that according to her excellency and beauty, some of our Gods would descend the heavens, to enjoy her on earth. And if he had demanded her of the Soldan our Lord, we think he would not have denied her him, but he never would declare his name, which was known after the wars of Antioch.

This they told Don Bellianis, who was greatly discomforted to hear of the love between the Knight and the Princess, as also to hear that every where the wonders of the Knight of the Image sounded in his ears, being so highly esteemed in his Ladies Country and so purposed never to rest until he met with him, supposing he should never be favoured of his Mistress, unless he should remove that Knight out of her sight, and so said to the Damzels: Hath there been no news of him since his departing, or did he so soon forget the Princess? No (said they) for it was said he every day came into the Court with several horse and armor, and then writ divers letters to her, beseeching her to receive him as her Knight, letting her know he was Prince of his land. The letter was delivered to us, and we fearing some evil to ensue thereby, durst not give it her. But what answer made you (said Don Bellianis) to him that gave you the letter? None other (answered it) Yet might you have given her it. There is none for their lives that durst have done so: for besides that she doth injure her self being but seldome seen, and abhorring such matters extreamly, she hateth this Prince greatly, because he was the cause that the Princess Aurora lost her Kingdom with her fathers life, which was Uncle

to

to our Lady Princess and brother to the mother. with that Don Bellianis rested somewhat comforted, & giving place to the thoughts, prayed the Damzels to go to bed, because he would slæp: which they did, & being withdrawn, they reasoned, that the Knight of the Golden Image should be in love with their Lady. Believe me not (said Persiana) if since you named the Princess Florisbella he hath not bæn captivated with her praises, else why should he so particularly inquire for her. Will you know it certainly (said Floriana,) let us rise softly, & hearken what he sayes, for it is not possible he should utter the abundance of his heart, and so rose in their smocks to hear him, who to himself complained, & now & then groaned, & sighed so bitterly, as if his heart would break. But at last with a soft voice he burst into these passions, ah me unfortunate Knight of the Golden Image, & most unhappy Prince, what accursed stars, void of all pity, have conducted thæ to Persepolis, to receive so disastrous a death? Ah wretch that I am, whom the power of hearts penetrating love, contenteth not with such cruelty to torment thæ, but telleth thæ, thou art unworthy to serve whom thou desirest. But thrice happy art thou Knight of the Images: for if thou dost suffer any passions and hearts languishment for the Divine beauty of the excellentest Princess that ever was born, yet are thy thoughts made known to her; where thou maist immortalize thy self, & call thæ only blessed of all mortal men. But ah me more happy far than thou art happy, that must bear the intolerable burthen of my grievances, without comfort, without help, & without hope. For though my souls true pain were known, where are the merits to reap so large a guerdon? But let fortune do her worst, yet will not I leave till I sæ how long my despised life will labour in the Labyrinth of misfortune. And if I do mæt with the Knight of the Images, I do protest to make it known on his stæl Burgonet, that none but I deserve the fruition of such thoughts, though he more largly posses the favour of time smiling chance, which I will obtain unless my tributary death deny me passage to effect my will, that hardly will be maintained with these oppressing torments. where with many groans & sighs, drowned in a flood of tears, he wet all his Bed.

Oh God (said Floriana) did you ever hear such a complaint of

a Knight in so short a time, not having seen her whom he loves: And I believe unless he be remedied, he will hardly escape with his life, being thus deeply wounded.

I know not what to say (replied her fellow Persiana) for it is the strangest thing that I have seen, that the love of a Lady should so wound the heart of a Knight, against whom neither the fury of Hell-bred beasts, nor strength of mighty Giants can prevail, & whom we have seen do such deeds, that scarce our selves can believe: & this is the greatest of all, that so strong a competitor in love is offered at this present to the Persian Prince. The Knight of the Golden Image is not so great as you estæm him (said Floriana) for I well know the high deeds & great state of the other, & though he be now disgraced by the Soldan, he may be reconciled.

All this know I (said the other) yet is he not like to this if he should be compared. And this Knight may be some great Prince, since (knowing the other sueth for her) he determineth the like. And as for his beauty you see the world cannot equal it: & also for his valour we our selves are good witnesses. And for my part, though I were sure to dye, I would procure all things to effect his desire, seeing the danger he freed us from, & the love we bare him & he us, deserveth all our endeavour in this case. In this they continued while they fell asleep, till the next morning, that they again dressed him. And truly the great desire he had to see himself out of that City, greatly helped his wounds, that the damzels said, he would be well within ten daies, & able to travel, which greatly joyed him, hoping to be quickly in the great City of Babylon, there to possess the sight of his heavenly Princess.

CHAP. XXVIII.

How between the Princes, Don Brianel and Arsileo, with the two Kings, it was determined in what manner the Duke Alfiron, & the Knight of the Golden Image should be set at liberty: And how the Princess Aurora spake with him about it: by whose counsel she departed from the Soldans Court.

The Prince Arsileo knowing how the Soldan governed himself with distempered passion of an unbridled rage, resolved with the two Kings his friends, whom this matter also concerned, because the Sophy had broken his promise, to procure the end of these

these affairs: and thereupon concluded, that seeing the Soldan would not free the Knight of the Golden Image, & the Duke, by intreative means, to make it known unto Don Bellianis, and to this end the Princess Aurora should visit him in prison, and being there, found him conversing with the Damzels about the Princess Florisbella, who knowing his passions, alwayes devised discoursive matter, upon their Lady, which sometime both pleased & displeased him, as the speeches accorded with his humour or delighted his wax-mollified heart, apt for any impression of that quality.

Now when the Princess entred, the Ladies rose to receive her, with that obeisance that befitted her state, and the Prince Don Bellianis about to do the like, was stayed by her, who so soon stepped to him that he could not do it; to whom she would have knæled, but he not permitting it, embraced her betwæn his arms with more affection than hitherto he had, because of his conceived Love of the Princess Florisbella, that so dearly loved this Lady, hoping by her means (through the help he should employ in her service) to obtain his Mistresses favour. The Princess Aurora sitting by him demanded how he felt himself of his dangerous wounds.

Well (dear Lady replied he) that seeing I am in such company there is no cause, to demand of me that, for if that fortune should lend her force to my harm, her power is so weakned hereby that she cannot. I gladly joy therein (answered she) and yet you are not content to have hitherto yielded no satisfaction for your cure, but that you will with words jest at us. Then were it good to require it (said Persiana) lest he think to pay us with conceits. I cannot satisfie you (replied the Prince) according to your merit or the great favour I have received: for if I could, you should not keep me in prison for it, as they do. What prison (said they) if the Soldan should set you at liberty, you would not be stayed by us. If I could so soon free my self of that goal, I mean (replyed Don Bellianis) as I can of this, the Soldans, the grief I sustain should not thus torment me. Let us leave this talk (said the Princess) for the time will come that you shall be free of all your prisons, and these Ladies also satisfied to their content: wherein if you shall disagree, I as umpire will moderatet the strife betwæn you, though I know it will not be requisite. But to the purpose, I will tell you the effect of my coming. You already know, how the Soldan (having

bæn intreated and importuned about it) hath alwayes refused to grant your liberty with the Duke Alfiron, denying it also to the Kings of Armenia and Tessifanty that greatly laboured your delivery. And the last answer he gave them, was, they should no more importune him therein, for if they did, it should not a little disadvantage them, that if they became of your faction, he would also apprehend them as Traytors to his state, and person. Now they have determined to end this matter one way or other forthwith, because the venturous Knight may not stay within the City, being commanded to the contrary by the Soldan, who knoweth no otherwise, but that he is gone, yet will not they conclude any thing without your advice. What Power have they (said Don Bellianis?) They have (replied she) eight thousand men well appointed, and here they gave me your sword to bring you, which I did as secretly as I could, tying it under my gown, and so gave it him. Don Bellianis took it, & more rejoyced therewith than if he had bæn presented with a Kingdom. The Damzels greatly wondred to see the great riches thereof, which was unvaluable.

Tell those Knights (most excellent Princess) that six dayes hence, they prepare, and have then in readiness all their men, that in the evening they suddenly assault the Soldans Palace, and procuring nought else but the liberty of the Duke Alfiron: & in any case they take with them the Princess Persiana, for it must needs be so, and you (dear Lady) shall take your leave of the Soldan, saying you will depart hence, seeing he would not let me go, & stay for us in the first village that we must pass, being thither directed by some of the Dukes folks, which otherwise would greatly let us, and I will send these Ladies to accompany you, lest we lose them in this attempt, and so herein let them not fail: and as for me, let the Prince Arsileo, Don Brianel and the Knights take no care, for so soon as they shall assault the Palace, I will be with them. You say well (replied the Princess) and if it please you I will advertise the princess Persiana thereof, that against the time she prepare her self, & not hide her at the noise. It will not be amiss (said Don Bellianis) whereupon the Princess Aurora, after she had bæn there a while, departed, leaving Don Bellianis in his chat with the Damzels, & she her self went straight to the Princess Persiana, to advertise her of that which had bæn determined,

which

which news highly contented her, that she thought she was not able to dissemble it: in which content the Princess Aurora left her, & went to the Lords of the faction, with them partaking of the knights of the golden Image determination, which greatly pleased. Then the Kings advertised the Souldiers how they would let the Duke Alfiron at liberty, seeing the Soldan would not do it, which they ought to do, being his subjects, & true hearted friends. Whereunto they yielded, making account that as in that hurly-burly, they should sack the Soldans Palace, so they might utterly subvert the City, putting it to spoil and pillage.

Which made them think every hour a month, till they met with the Soldans power, to be revenged on him for all the injuries done them, and for the breach of his word. Many in the mean time solicited the Soldan to quietness, but nothing would prevail with him, determining to put the Duke to death, which if he did not, was for that he expected the daily comming of the Prince Perianeo, his son, with whose presence he feared not the whole power of the whole united Universe, thinking then more safely to effect his will. Thus were five of the six days past, that Don Bellianis had appointed, wherein he was up, and walked about, and in a manner well & able to bear armour, who seeing the determinate time approached sent the Damzels to accompany the Princess Aurora, who seeing it to be requisite, did accordingly, telling the Sophy that the Knight of the Golden Image was well, and needed not more their help. He requested them to remain in the Palace till they minded to depart. They thanked him for that courtesie, answering they would go attend the pleasure of the Princess Aurora, whom they found with all her Ladies, in readiness to depart, and was comming to take her leave of the Soldan, but ere they went the Ladies were furnished with good palfreys; who returned to the Soldan with the Princess, that being before him thus began.

Great is the wrong (most mighty Lord) which in thy Land thou hast offered me, giving me cause to complain abroad of thy discourteous entertainment, having against all right and Kingly justice, imprisoned the Knight of the golden Image, that accompanied me, and to banish from thy territorie so brave a man as the adventurous Knight, with what else thou knowest. Wherefore seeing within thy house, court, and Palace these injuries I received, I have

deter-

determined to return unto the King my Father, though grieved to the heart, through want of the best company that ever Lady had.

And I do wish, that with mildness you would cut off the dangers that hereby may ensue, that I fear my heart denyeth: which if you will not do at my intreats, every one will repute it to proceed of your supreme vertues, salving thereby all things past.

And remember the blood spilt by the Prince of Phœnicia in the battel, which through your ingratitude will else disparage & scandalize your royal name, being heretofore reputed for so mighty a King, now to defame & stain thy spotless state, with the name of tyrannous cruelty, and bloody barbarism. And so ended, expecting the Soldans answer, who a little stood in suspence, whether he should set at liberty Don Bellianis, or no: but being altogether blinded with a passionate rage and self-will, respecting no law, made this reply.

I know not (fair Princess) why you should thus cholerickly argue against me for the thing that if I did not would ruinate the honour of my vast Empery, & make me little feared of my subjects: so that were it not for this, I would willingly give you the Knight of the golden Image. What committed or intended offence, can you impute to the Knight of the Golden Image (said Don Arsileo, that did come with her) being none of your subjects? or else do you think there shall be no other Judge of this matter, but you, which with your unjust passion, will be but badly determinated.

Great is your pride, Prince of Rasia (replied the Soldan) to presume to give me counsel that need it not. I command you to speak no more hereof, and straight get you out of my Empire, doing me all the harm you can, for I nothing esteem you, nor the greatness of your Kingdoms, whereof you and your companions do so much vaunt of.

Arsileo became so full of choler, that he would have replied according to those speeches, but the Princess stayed, & required him not to do it, dissembling his anger, for that present, for he should have time to be revenged at full, making him repent every thing he had done, and so took their leaves of him, expecting the next morrow for their revenge, and for that time set forward on their journey. The chiefest Nobility of the City, with an infinite number of Knights, accompanied the Princess Aurora, till they brought her

her to a little village six miles from the City, where leaving her they all returned back.

Arsileo seeming to go with the Princes, returned also so soon as it was night, the better to pass unknown, where he ordered what should be done the evening following, commanding all their men to go to the King of Armenia's Palace, from whence they might the better march. The Prince Don Belianis not forgetting what he had to do, expected the appointed hour, very attentively, as one that should pass through the Gates of death, wanting his good armour. The Soldan on the other side, was not without great fear, daring almost to trust none, that he would in person visit his watch, and Centinels, like a man that unadvisedly, and without counsel, procureth with rage and unlawfull means, to effect a vain opinion, as at this present happened to the Soldan of Siconia, a King most puisant and mighty, of the Persians, whom the overmuch and arrogant pride of his large government, & Empire, with so bold and valiant a son as the Prince Perianeo, otherwise called the Knight of the Images, whose equal the world could hardly yield, did make him violate his royal word (a thing so odious to any Prince) which made him fear and doubt his safety in his own Kingdom and Palace, and among his subjects, and not be able to punish them.

And also his daughter, that though at that present she desired not his death, yet sought she the overthrow of his content like a mortal and capital. For this now was the state of the Siconian Soldan, and great Emperor of the Persian Monarchy, who to compass and bring to pass the foolish and mad opinion of a vain intent, esteemed not the valour of such great Princes, and hardy Knights. Wherefore if he escaped with his life, in recompence of his ingratitudes, he may account it no little good. But leaving this we will return to our former purpose, as in the Chapter following shall be declared.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIX.

The brave and dangerous battel fought in Perſepolis, between the Princes and Knights, with the Soldans Power, about the liberty of the Duke Alfiron, with the whole ſucceſs thereof.

AS ſoon as the bright ſplendor of heavens all-piercing eye had ended his diurnal courſe about the compaſs of the ordred earth, ſome heart impoveriſht Knights through diſmaying fear and pale timorous cowardiſe deſpaired (as in ſuch caſes, often happeneth) of their ſure ſucceſs, whileſt the Princes Don Brianel & Arſileo, accompanied with the Kings of Armenia, and Teſſifanty commanded all their Knights to mount on their horſes, expecting farther order. Don Brianel cauſed Don Bellianis Dwarffs to convey his Armour, where the Princeſs Aurora ſtayed. And charged all their troops upon their aſſault to cry aloud, Phœnicia, they iſſued forth as cloſely as they could. And for that all the City was up in arms that day, there was no regard taken of them, thinking they were to guard the Palace, whither being come, and finding the guard aforeſaid, they began, crying Phœnicia, to aſſault with ſuch fury, that they unhorſed above two thouſand at the firſt incounter. But they perceiving the deceit, gathered themſelves together in ſuch ſort, that the fight on both ſides waxed moſt bloody, with the death of an infinite number of men: though through the nights obſcurity, it could not be diſcerned, yet by theſe cryes, knew they one another: for the Soldans men had their watch words among them, whereby the battel ſtill continued very fierce, defending ſo couragiouſly the entry, that for all Don Brianel and Arſileo performed wonders, yet their men could win no advantage: whereupon they determined to alight on foot, to do it more eaſily, when ſuddenly there were brought ſo many lights that one might well know the other. The Prince Don Bellianis no ſooner heard the outcryes, but caſting his mantle about his arm, drew his ſword, & deſcended the ſtairs, but ere he was at the foot of them, the guard beſet him, eſpecially the Captain, that would have given him a dangerous blow on the head, to have cleaved it in twain, had not he taken it upon his ſword wherewith he cut his leg in two, but ere he fell on the ground (Don Bellianis defending himſelf of the other Knights blows) drew the Captain to him by the ſhield that he took it from

from him, and ſtepping back buckled it about his arm & with them began ſo brave, and ſo cruel a fight, as if as great a number were with him, but the place being ſomewhat narrow he tok all their blows upon his ſword and ſhield, his being ſo deadly, that in little time he had thrown down dead above thirty Knights: whoſe huge and monſtrous wounds, would make any afraid to ſee them, and ſo oppreſt the others, that their clamour and outcryes, ſeemed to overwhelm the Palace.

The Knights being with the fear of death diſmaid and not able to abide the fury of the Knight of the golden Image, turned their backs and fled.

Don Bellianis letting them go, armed himſelf with one of the dead Knights armour, and not longer ſtaying, entred the Palace, where in the great hall he eſpied the Soldan at the light of torches that were there, who with a troop of choſen Knights was going to ſuccor the palace which he heard was aſſaulted by the Prince of Phœnicia, for ſo they thought by their adverſaries clamor. Whom ſeing, he conceived ſuch rage againſt him, that aloud he ſaid. I have thee now in time, falſe Soldan of Perſia, violater of the royal faith & word, that thou ſhalt ſee how little thou ſhalt get by my impriſonment, for know I am the Knight of the Golden Image. Who is able to ſet down the extreme fear that ſurpriſed the Soldan at thoſe words, judging himſelf at that inſtant utterly deſtroyed?

The Knights put themſelves before the Soldan to defend him, which Don Bellianis ſeing, redoubled his rage and maugre their force ſet ſo furiouſly upon them, that as a wolf among a troop of ſheep he beat them down together, who not able to reſiſt him, made him large way to paſs by them, which he did to revenge himſelf at full on the Soldan. Who ſeing him ſo determinate come againſt him, retired to a window falling over a garden, through which for his beſt ſafeguard he caſt himſelf down, that according to the fall it was a great wonder he beat not out his brains. Yet it bruiſed all his body and diſjointed both arms and legs: the like befell above thirty Knights following him, flying from the Knight as from the touch of a death ſtinging Baſiliſk.

The Prince Don Bellianis would have done ſo, ſuch was his hate againſt the Soldan, but determined firſt to end the battel, thinking afterward to have ſome time to execute his will, and ſo turning

to the Knights saw them run headlong out of the Palace, and thrusting himself in among them, found his companions that had forced the Soldans men to retire back to the stairs, which they defended like them that expected the fearful stroke of death; so that Don Bellianis assailing them at their backs, made such desolation of them, that they thought so great a number behind as before, which so bereft them of their senses, that how to resolve they knew not, till the death-giving wound, pierced their daunted hearts, that most of them rested wounded and dead. The Dukes souldiers seeing this, began to sack and rob the Palace: the ransacking of whose treasury was their chiefest hope of gain.

Don Bellianis and Arsileo in the mean time rusht into the Princess Persiana's Chamber, who before her semed very grieved, and being by the Prince seen, he aloud said. It behoves thee, Princess Persiana, to go with me, in recompence of the wrongs, and imprisonment your father put me in, against Laws and justice, and thereupon took her betwixt his arms, and some other Knights did so, by two or three of her Laides; whose lamentable shrieks made the Palace to eccho with the noyse. And so carrying them, were met by the adventurous Knight, that was coming for her, having set at liberty the Duke that came with him, who with such great admiration and exceeding joy to see his Lady, had almost swouned to the ground.

Thereupon Don Bellianis commanded the Trumpets to sound the retreat, to withdraw the Soldiers, and meeting with the Kings of Armenia and Tessifanty, led them to their own quarters, which they could hardly do, being so given to the spoil: but being united together, Don Bellianis charged the Dukes Captains to conduct their men to their Masters City that was in the Kingdom of Persia, which they did with great hast, seeing their enterprise so happily succeeded, and also because there was above 40 thousand men armed there. And themselves having no guides, stayed within the City till the morrow, lest they should lose themselves in the night. But the Dukes men kept on their way so well, that at the appearing of the Sun, they were hard by the place where the day before they left the Princess Aurora, where also came the Princess, and there they all alighted to rest them, where the Princess Aurora welcomed them, with the Duke Alfiron, whose gladness was as

as great as his ſorrow had bæn before, rendring together with the other Princes innumerable thanks unto the two Kings for their aid, and confirming an everlaſting and inviolable bond of amity that laſted all their lives, as the courſe of this great Hiſtory amply dilateth. And not ſtaying in this place, departed thence, where we leave them to ſet down what they did.

CHAP. XXX.

What the Soldan did, having underſtood his daughters loſs: And how Coroliano and Boraldo his brother, followed the Dukes power, with great troops, with the ſucceſs of a moſt cruel battel that paſſed between them.

WHat tongue is able to expreſs the many and loud laments, and lamentable cries made in the Palace by the popularity and others, which alſo the Ladies and damzels with their great clamors augmented, for the loſs of the Princeſs Perſiana. Now the Knights that eſcaped the fury of the battel, ſæing their adverſaries gone, went to ſæk the Soldan, whom they found in the Garden, as before is mentioned; they took him and did bear him thence to his chamber, and laid him in his bed, and hearing the piteous ſhrieks of the Damoſels, enquired the cauſe, which was told him to be, for that their adverſaries had taken with them the Princeſs Perſiana, his Daughter, and had ſet at liberty the Duke Alfiron, and all that more he had ſæn: which when he knew, the extream anguiſh and ſorrow of theſe evils almoſt bereft him of his living breath. But thereupon he called a couſin of his, a luſty and couragious Knight called Coroliano, and commanded him to follow the enemy, with all the people in the City, to reſcue his ſtoln Daughter, and that he ſhould ſpare no mans life that fell into his hands: Which he uttered with ſuch inraged grief that the tears trickled down his face. Coroliano did all like a man accuſtomed to ſuch dangers, aſſuring himſelf to be avenged on their foes for all their loſſes. Wherefore at his command the city ſtraight ecchoed with the ſound of all maner of military inſtruments, and all that were able to bear arms, armed themſelves and went to the Palace, ſo that in little time there were gathered above forty thouſand men, which in all haſt he led out of Perſepolis, kæping no order in their

march that their enemies might not get before them who then were above 15 miles afore.

In this manner they went till they came to a City belonging to the Soldan, where they that night rested; and understanding there, how the enemy determined to dine the next morrow at Bollera, thought, if he staid, he should not overtake them as he would. Wherefore about midnight he set forward with all his men, making such haste, that by break of day he espied them, descending a hill in good order, which much joyed him, that he presently commanded his Trumpets to sound, which Don Bellianis hearing looked back, and saw so many men make toward them, that they covered the plains: it somewhat troubled him, wanting means to guard the Princess. Yet with as much celerity as the time afforded, he wheeled his companies about, setting the Princess at one side of the mountain, guarded with five hundred Knights: and seeing his men began to fear with the sight of such multitudes, he encouraged them, repraying and intreating them to consider that those troops were of little moment and less valour, coming half vanquished, being only led by the eagerness of revenge for the slaughter that was made of them, which like blind men brought them to their utter destruction. This said, he took with him the adventurous Knight, the Prince Arsileo, the two Knights, and the Duke, and placing themselves before their men, expected their adversaries.

Coroliano, being descended on the plain, divided his Soldiers into two Squadrons, the one he committed to his brother Boraldo, & the other he led himself, and imagining what they had done he commanded two thousand chosen Knights to assault the corner of the mount, certainly supposing that the Princess Persiana was there, and so with great clamors they furiously ran upon the Dukes men, who with their valiant guides were ready to receive them, and so terrible were their incounters on that plain that above four thousand of Corolianos Knights were unhorsed, by reason that their horses were weary & tyred, with the haste they had made, that they could scarce hold out thitherto. Don Bellianis, and his companions on their side, overthrew above sixty to the ground dead: and thrusting themselves among their enemies, that they seemed like so many furies sent for their utter desolation. But the adverse numbers were so many, that the dead nothing discouraged the living, especi-

ally

ally, for that Coroliano so animated them, that it may be said only he upheld the battel. Which Arsileo seeing, took a lance from one of his company, and made against him. Coroliano did the like, and met so furiously that their shields and armour were pierced, and themselves rested on horseback sorely wounded: then drawing their strong swords, forced each other at every blow to bow thir heads to the Saddle pummel.

While they were thus in fight, Don Bellian's men through his strength (& their enemies having no other Captain but the other) began to win some ground, with such slaughter of both sides, that neither part might well boast of the victory in the end. Which things, when Boraldo perceived, would no longer stay nor expect any word from his brother, but like an arrow sent from a steeled bow maketh his swift way through the airy passage, so he with his fresh Battalion, set against his adversaries, seeking on whom he might with most honour break his lance, espied the King of Armenia, that with devilish rage massacred his men, against whom resting his spear overturned him therewith, doing the like to the King of Tessifanty on whom he broke his spear. Whereat with a loud voice, he incouraged his fainting Souldiers, commanding them to spare none of their lives that had committed such rebelious treason. And so passing along he met the Duke Alfiron, who discharged upon one another the fury of their cutting swords, that Boraldo received a little wound on the head, and the Duke fell in a trance, and had fallen had he not held by. Boraldo not staying there passed forward, proud of the blow that he gave: at this time the Soldans men recovered, and began to win much ground insomuch that Don Bellianis, nor the adventurous Knight being not able with their valour to stay their men they began to retire back: which when the Knight of the golden Image saw, like a chafed Lyon wanting his prey he thrust himself among the thickest of his adversaries, that unhappy was he whom his blow reached: in such manner beating and overthrowing Knights with their horses, that his armour was all covered, and his sword ricked with blood, which forced every one to fly his fury, as doth the fearfull partridge fly from the deadly persuit of a towring Faulcon. For there was no Knight that he met, how valiant soever, but with one blow he strook down from his horse. And passing thus along where Arsileo and Coroliano were fiercely

in

in fight together, both which had such piteous wounds that it moved the Prince to compassion.

Here then arrived Boraldo, & seeing his brother in such case, & to have the worst, raised himself in his stirrops, & (unable to be resisted by Don Bellianis, that in great hast pricked toward him) gave him so mighty a blow backward on the head, that cutting his helm it made a grievous wound, & he had like to have fallen, having altogether lost his senses. Which so inraged the heart of Don Bellianis, that the very blood seemed to run down his eyes, to see him so used in his presence. And in his fury he struck at Coroliano (that was discharging another blow on Arsileo) which fell with such huge strength lighting on his shield that it divided it into two, and his sword descending on the horses neck, it also cut it off, falling on the earth with Coroliano and his horse. But Boraldo at this instant, wounded Don Bellianis on the one side, that piercing his armour, it piteously opened his flesh, and so swiftly redoubled another on his Helm, that it cut all his buckles, leaving his head unarmed. Never was there any Basilisk more invironed, nor Lyon more eager of his prey, than Don Bellianis was now, burning in fury of revenge, And turning upon Boraldo with one blow tumbled his shield in two, together with himself sore wounded to the ground. Coroliano that by this had risen, knowing him by his armour to be the haughty Knight of the golden Image, on whose overthrow consisted the good success of his enterprize, thrust his horse into the belly, that he fell dead with his master on his back; which Don Bellianis seeing, leapt from him with celerity, which he had scant done, but he was assaulted by about two thousand Knights that came to aid Coroliano, yet this help little helped him, for Don Bellianis strook him out of his senses, and looking for Arsileo, saw him in great danger fighting with Boraldo, in whose behalf many here arrived, but he joining with his cousin (having laced his Helm) wounded so furiously on all sides, that they had incompassed themselves with carkasses of slaughtered men. Yet for all this they were so oppress with fresh multitudes, that by no means they could mount on horseback, which Don Bellianis perceiving, doubling his anger, laid about him, that in despight of them, he mounted on horse, on which he somwhat easier laboured in the fight, till Arsileo had done the like, wherewith they brake their passage through the thickest of them,

who

who also mounted Boraldo, that was sorely wounded, and carried Coroliano out of the battel, which grew more cruel than all the day before. Don Bellianis by meer forced valour, making his way through the sharp pointed spears and swords, came where the Kings of Armenia and Tessifanty were on foot, and like to bee taken prisoners, and had they bee known, they had there lost their lives, who by his arrival, got freshly mounted, and together renew'd the fight more fierce than at the first. The battel being at this stay the 2000 knights that Coroliano had sent, assaulted the corner of the Hill where the Princes were. But the 500 Knights, which were the valiantest of the Dukes whole troops, left not their charge, but in their places began so fierce a skirmish that many fel down dead on both sides. But the Soldans men being many more in number, make through them, spoiling their order: whereat the two Ladies the Princess Persiana and Aurora, seemed more dead than alive. But at this time from the other side of the valley, there appeared the number of 4000 knights well appointed, which made toward that place: from whence there was a Knight sent to know on whose behalf they came, who afar off discerned him to be the courageous Prince Don Contumeliano of Phœnicia, whose armor they very well knew, (as is said:) Which greatly greeved the Soldans men, judging, that of necessity he would be against them, and on the contrary, the Duke Alfiron's Troops were very glad thereof, whose approach revived the sorrowful Ladies. And the Duke aloud cried, courage, courage, brave Knights, and animate your fainting forces, against your fear-frighted adversaries, for the admired honour of time wondring Chivalry cometh in your aid. Which he nothing missaid, for in the whole Camp there was none that excelled him, except him that in disguised habit had subjugated his heart, with great courtesie and bounty, which is the true honour of all brave knights. He now being come to the dangerous skirmish, bravely overthrew a knight, and drawing him apart, informed himself by him, of all that he desired to know, and turning to his followers, that were all subjects unto the Duke Alfiron, of whom at Don Contumeliano's command, a great multitude had before gone to Persepolis from Bollera, to aid the Duke if their help he should need, who having here met the four thousand, united themselves together, so bravely assalting them that in the corner of the hill were

fighting,

fighting that none daring longer to stay, turned their backs and fled toward their other company, where the furious battel still continued, entring by that side where Don Bellianis was, killing his horse under him, and he bruised with the great fall, rose up in extream danger of his life, for his men began to give back, which forced him with meer strength and sole labour of his valour, to withstand the adversaries fury, laying on all sides to get a horse.

But his enemies seeing him to be their only destruction, rush in multitudes upon him, no more fearing his death-giving sword, than if he had that day hurt none. Whereby though many died by him, yet was he sorely wounded both with swords and lances, for though they were not great by reason of his good armor, yet through divers places there issued infinite blood.

But his adversaries eager of revenge, procured nought but his death, insomuch that they would often close their eyes, and fall upon him, because they would not see his strokes, and had not he leapt sometimes here and sometimes there, some one would have gat him fast, which if they did he greatly hazarded his life.

Yet he could not so defend himself, but that at last some 50 of them despising death, fell upon him together laying fast hold on his arms, wherein it behoved him to use his strength, only to get from them, kicking and spurning with his feet, that in the end, he fell down with above half of them upon him, & seeing himself in such danger, having there received above ten wounds, suddenly stept away, rising on his feet on the other side, bestowing deadly blows on all sides that there arose such great and mighty clamors, and out-cries that the rest of the battel was nothing to this fight, incouraging one another only to kill that Knight, on whose death depended their victory.

In this season arrived here the Prince of Phœnicia with his company, that came in pursuit of those that fled, and hearing there that great noise, so bravely set upon them, that they unhorsed above 2000 knights, with which fury the Prince prest through them, till he came where the Knight of the Golden Image was, whom he knew (though he never saw him) by the device of his shield, and seeing him do such wonders, said to himself, that not without cause he enjoyed the name, and deserved to be called the sole-Worthy of admired chivalry; and being about to alight to give his horse unto

Don

Don Bellianis, the mighty Boraldo came thither to succor his men that here lost their gotten vantage, which they did not on the other side, because he valiantly had withstood the force of the Princes Don Brianel and Arsileo. And espying that Knight, straight knew him by his armor, thinking him to be he that had slain the King of Cyprus, & fearing his force, durst not like a good Knight confront him face to face, supposing that in a battel any thing was tolerable, raised himself on his stirrops, and with his hands behind his back, gave him so huge a blow, that it made him bend his head lower than his horses ears. Which Don Bellianis perceiving, having known the Prince, and thinking he would have fallen from his horse, ran to help him. But the Prince Don Contumeliano losing no whit of his valour, at such blows returned upon him, with his sword hoisted aloft, determining at that blow to part his head in two. The other with like intent came also upon him, and at one instant discharged their rage on each other, that Contumelianeo was like to fall, but Boraldo lost his senses. The Prince seconded another, that therewith he tumbled from his horse, and alighting to cut off his head, unlaced his helm, and found him in such case, that he judging him dead, let him lie, though it had been better for him there to have made him sure, than for his after harm to give him his life, as this history discourseth. And going to the Knight of the Golden Image, with great courtesie thus said. Mount upon this my horse (most haughty Knight, usurper of anothers heart) and follow the victory ordained by the Gods, to all your happy and glorious acts.

The Knight of the Golden Image replied, leave not your horse for me (high and renowned Prince) for though I in this battel do miscarry, there is nothing lost in respect of your royal person, how much the more that the Knights horse whom you have slain sufficeth me. So mounting on Boraldo's horse, the Phœnician Prince did the like upon his own, together, overturned the fury of the fight, that through want of an infinite number of the Soldans men, his Captains began to yæld the field. Which their adversaries seeing, so hotly renew'd their decaying forces, that their enemies were constrained to save their lives, by giving the liberty to their horses, in which flight, being bravely pursued, there was an innumerable number slain, that after the fight was found that of

the Soldans Men were slain above 25 thousand. With not above two thousand lost on the Dukes behalf. Which good success was by these Kings and Princes worthily attained, every one with immortal praises thanked him: to whom their Devotion was most (being in the whole Camp) but only the three Christian Knights. This done they went to meet the Princes that were coming to them: Between whom their courteous greeting and kind salutes were such, as if they never before had seen one another.

Every one greatly honoured the Prince Contumeliano, some for his aid in that great danger newly past, the others (that knew no otherwise) not only for the same thanked him, but also for the overthrow he had given the fearfull Felixton, King of Cyprus.

At which time arrived the Duke Alfiron, who seeing the Phœnician Prince, would have alighted, being sorely wounded, but he would by no means suffer it. Give me your royal white hands, (most excellent Prince) that I may kiss them (said the Duke) in token that I received twice my despised life by your means. Don Contumeliano seeing the Dukes error, would not longer seem to rob the glory from the victory by joying in anothers Honour, contenting himself with that he had won in that battel; and obtaining of such friends, replied. I will not (magnanimous Duke, and you heroick Knights) suffer your error any further to proceed, nor longer usurp the honor of so high a victory, from him that bindeth all wandring Knights in the orbed Earth to his fury, and seeing now there is no danger in discovering it, know (great Lords) that he which hath won the immortal glory of the victory, is your friend, & Lord of us all, the never enough praised, the Knight of the Golden Image, to whom by a strange adventure I lent my armor, wherewith he undertook the fight wherein befell all that you saw, and dilated the manner how he found him, and in what habit, concealing nothing but what happened after the fight. Which heard of the Dukes, Kings, Princes and Knights there present, they highly wondred at his discourse, whereto the Duke thus said. Now am I not (renowned Prince) so much indebted as I thought, for having given all my self unto the Knight of the Golden Image, he doth in taking care for my matters busie himself in his own, whereby my duty can be no greater than it was before.

You have in nothing so much cause (said Don Brianel) to thank him;

him; for what he did in that battel, he had therin as great a part as your self, or else, had he not been there present, very ill should we have defended his honour. Whereupon they newly imbraced Don Bellianis, saying he had not done well in not disclosing himself to them, that they might with more confidence have used their arms in that battel.

Speak no more of this (said Don Bellianis) for it is evident if any honour I have, or any thing performed therein, it only proceeds from you. Wherefore it is I that am only bound to you all.

Marry, if that were so (replied Don Brianel) I had there lost my life, being unable to defend it. The Prince Arsileo, and the Princesses disturbed this conference, coming to greet Don Bellianis, where they renewed their thanks.

Which done (their men having ransackt their enemies camp) the two Kings, the Princesses, Don Bellianis, with the Prince Arsileo, the Phœnician Prince and the venturous Knight, directed their way towards Bollera; by the same discourling of many things. Don Bellianis being of opinion they should return and sack Persepolis, which they might easily have done, being left without any Garison. But the Princess Persiana, with the other Princes, put him from it, alledging their men to be weak, and weary of their last travel. And so at last arrived in the city, where well ordering their troops, and other busines, went to the Dukes Palace to repose themselves, where their wounds were dressed.

The Prince Don Contumeliano lodged with Don Bellianis at his intreaty, who greatly joyed with his company, being a Knight of pleasant discourse. Where we leave them till we have set down what the Soldans men did, after they were overthrown and put to flight.

CHAP. XXXI.

What the Soldans men did after the battel, and how they carried the news of their discomfiture to the Soldan.

THe battel being ended in manner aforesaid, part of the Soldans men that survived, took their way to Persepolis, and hid themselves in the wood, and some that were more hardy, closely mingled themselves with their adversaries, having left behind them those things that might discover them, who heard Don Contumeliano's discourse, how the knight of the Golden Image was he that had slain the fearful King of Cyprus.

These Knights having closely hid themselves, expected the dark nights approach, and the closest that they might, departed thence having not entred into the City, and by the pale reflect of the shining moon, loking about the field for the bodies of Coroliano and Boraldo to carry them to Persepolis, did at last find them. Coroliano being in perfect sense, but Boraldo yet lay in his trance, being piteously wounded, and extream faint with the loss of much more blood than his brother: and setting them on horseback with two knights behind to guide them, came the next day to Persepolis, where incomparable was the lamentable grief, generally of all, all participating of the present loss, and certainly according to their grievous clamours and languishing cries, their adversaries (had they come upon them) might easily have taken and sackt the City, for being overwhelmed in bloody tears breaking from their hearts that they knew not one another.

But above all the rest, the distressed Soldan of Persia, with madding rage rent his cloaths, tearing the auncient hairs of his grave beard, and blaspheming and defying his Gods, with hideous shrieks cried out. Oh unhappy Soldan of Persia, is it possible the Gods should honour thee with so large an Empire, to disgrace thy glory with this shame, and that art not able to revenge thee on thy rebellious subject, that hath slain thy son in law, and in despight of thee, stoln thy only daughter?

But thrice happy are you Coroliano and Boraldo, that have in defence of your dear Prince and Country, wrestled with all-conquering death, leaving your lives for an immortal Trophy of your true

true loyalty. And unhappy am I that is not able to die, when and where my fame and glory is drowned in the lasting Center of black oblivion. But let fortune do her worst, as she already hath in times past. For I vow by the immortal Gods, never to cease till I have put to utter desolation him and his accomplices, that hath bæn cause of all these evils. Thus as he was most bitterly raging and exclaiming against his cruel fate, there entred the hall-gate the horses, that (as it is said) brought his Cousins, who (though piteously wounded, as may be beleæved) spake unto the Soldan, that somewhat comforted himself, to sæ them not altogether dead, and commanded them to be laid on a bed, in his own Chamber, where they were cured.

And the other Knights beginning to discry their overthrow, said, that having almost utterly defeated their enemies, there arrived the Prince Contumeliano of Phœnicia, with four thousand men, with whom after a bloody conflict, we rested thus vanquished, and defeated. Oh me disgraced that I am (said the Soldan) and was that devilish Knight there, that slew the mighty King of Cyprus? I do not now think much of your defeature, seeing he and the knight of the Golden Image were against you; yet assure you I rejoyce to know they are both there, that our revenge may be the greater. We have bæn greatly deceived herein, dread Soveraign (said the knights) for the Knight that deprived the King of Cyprus of his life is not the Prince of Phœnicia, but it is the invincible Knight of the Golden Image, that only for the same effect came forth of Prison disguised, in habit only of one of his damzels, and repeated all Contumeliano's report. Is it possible (Oh immortal Gods) that such a thing should be, which I yet dare not beleæve: and surely there was not in the world a man blinder to know him than I. For I sæing him so wounded, and bleæding through his Armour, should have imagined it could have bæn none but he. But tell me, what is Don Contumeliano? Which should be no bad Knight, seeing the Knight of the Golden Image took his name and Arms. One of the valiantest Knights in the whole Camp, is that Prince (said they) for at two blows did he bring your Colin Boraldo to this pass you sæ, with many other worthy deeds that in the battel he performed.

But

But tell me, what is Don Contumeliano? which should be no bad Knight, seeing the Knight of the Golden Image took his name and Arms. One of the valiantest Knights in the whole Camp is that Prince (said they) for at two blows did he bring your Cousin Boraldo to this pass you see, with many other worthy deeds that in the battel he performed.

These news much discomforted the Soldan, in which state he continued eight days, till he was altogether well of his fall, in which time he heard by the report of many knights, of the adventure that was not far from the City. Who greatly desiring to see it, went thither, accompained with many knights. Where being come, and reading the letters of the Pillar, divers would prove it, but in a little space, as many as did were overcome, and yet could see no body.

I have many years ago, heard of this adventure (said the Soldan) and how it was here, and I know that in the Soldan my Grandfathers time, many ancient knights proved it. And so from that time it was published abroad, that many wandring knights from divers places came to prove themselves in it.

The Soldan after this returned to the City, and caused his command to be proclamed throughout his large Empire, that every one able to bear arms, should within two moneths be at Persepolis. Whereby he began to order the mightiest and strongest Army by land, that untill that time was ever seen in those parts. For within one moneth, there was arrived in that City above three hundred thousand valiant horsemen, and well appointed. The Soldan sent to many places, as well abroad as at home, to seek for his son the Prince Perianeo, to lead those troops against his adversaries: with whose coming, he so assured himself to be revenged, as if it were already executed. For he not only thought to destroy the Duke Alfiron and the Prince of Phœnicia, but also thought to subvert the Kingdome, and King of Rasia, whom he imagined to be father unto Arsileo, and if those wars happily succeeded, to pass against the Grecian Emperour, whom he knew to be free of the danger that Don Gallaneo of Antioch had put him in. So that these imaginations made him longer stay than he had purposed, preparing all necessaries for the wars.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXII.

How Don Brianel required by the Prince Don Bellianis, departed towards the Kingdom of Antioch, how the Duke Alfiron married the Princeſs Perſiana, and what ſtrange things happened in the Jouſts unto the Princes Contumeliano, Arſileo and Floriſpiano.

THe Knights (as is ſaid) being within the City of Bollera, made famous by their being there, were within fiftæn days throughly whole of their wounds, though not of that which the amorous Prince Don Bellianis had in his heart for love of the beauteous Princeſs Florisbella, which had ſo penetrated his tender breaſt that he determined (upon the good ſucceſs of thoſe affairs) never to ceaſe, till his eyes might enjoy her happy ſight, thinking therewith to mitigate the cruel paſſions of his tormented heart.

Thus continuing thereupon, one day taking apart the Princeſs Perſiana, he told her that he thought it not amiſs, if ſhe deſired the accompliſhing of her deſires, ſhe ſhould forthwith wed the Duke Alfiron, leſt the changes of Fortune might hereafter diſturb it, & that the Soldan her Father would not be ſo cruel, that hearing it, would not rejoyce to ſee her married to her content. She that nothing elſe deſired, ſaid, ſhe would in every thing accord to his will, derogating in no reſpect from it. Wherefore, thanking her for that honour, he conferred of it with the Duke, who thereto agréed, appointing the nuptials to be ſolemnized ten days after, which was the time they celebrated a feaſt dedicated to their Mahomet.

All the Knights greatly rejoyced at that Don Bellianis had done, preparing themſelves very ſumptuouſly againſt the marriage-day, ordering a moſt ſtately Tourney in honor of the nuptials. And in the mean time, hearing of the Soldans preparations and innumerable multitudes, neglected not to demand the aid of all her Friends and Allies.

And Kings ſent to their Kingdoms, that all their help might there with ſpæd be united. And ſo theſe great enemies being thus nigh one to the other, were by their ſpyals ſtill advertized of eithers doings.

The

The Knight of the Golden Image much grieved to see these delays, because they hindred and kept him there from his prosecuted journey: dispairing of hoped joys, wanting the presence of the causer of his grief, which he somewhat lightned, by daily conversing with the Damzels of his mistress, else otherwise he hardly could have staid there all the while, which he beguiled with pleasant discourses with these Princes and Ladies; and one day talking with the Princess Aurora about her affairs in Antioch, she said to him, it would not be unnecessary she should write unto the Governour of that kingdome, placed by the Prince Don Gallaneo, on whom she reposed great trust.

I think it not amiss (answered Don Bellianis) if you suppose it will not disadvantage you. But who shall carry it, when it is made? I shall want no Knight to do it (replied she) or if I do, one of my Damzels shall undertake the troublesome toil.

Whereupon Don Bellianis with pen Ink & paper, wrote the letter, and when it was done called the Prince Don Brianel, who (as is said) greatly desired to be imployed in the Princesses service, sayd to him he should be the bearer of that letter, being a matter to be trusted on none but him. There is no reason (my good Lord) said the Princess, that you should undergo such trouble, having already hitherto taken so much for my sake, you need not now further endanger your self in these new and such seldome seen toils, having at my hands received no favor for any. It is no trouble (dear Lady, said he) which is undertaken in your behalf, especially in the advancing your glory: and therfore I am encouraged streight to depart hence. I gladly would have accompanied you (replied she) if this present war did not hinder me, where Don Bellianis is also necessarily stayed.

It is better that you remain here (said Don Bellianis) for the Prince Don Brianel will quickly return with answer: and thus they agreed, that the next day he should depart, telling those Knights that he went about an earnest matter of his own, which forced him so to leave them, assuring them his return should be with speed. And so taking his parting leave, the insuing morning he set forwards on his voyage, continuing his daily journeys, till he arrived at Antioch, where

where there befel him great adventures, as shall be set down in his due place.

So leaving him, and returning to our former purpose, the day was at length come, wherein the royal nuptials of the Princess Persiana with the Duke Alfiron should be celebrated: against which time, every one provided themselves according to their state in such tumultuous Times, wherein they daily expected the arrival of their enemies: for which cause, lest they should be suddenly surprised, they kept in armour above 8000. Men, which they had within the City besides their Camp they had without the walls, intrenched about the furthest place of the City, because one should not trouble the other in their sally. Which multitudes were divided in equal Squadrons and Battalions, as they were ready to fight some pight battel. The day come, the Princess Persiana issued forth the contentedst Lady living, she was lead by the arm by Don Bellianis, going all on foot, because they would be the better seen, with a soft pace. When they were seen by their armed troops, they all shouted aloud, saying, it is a just thing that we all spend our dearest lives for the safetie of such Lords, or impall their heads with the imperial Diadem, which they so well deserve, and therewith discharged so many pieces of Ordnance, and sounded so many instruments of all sorts, as it seemed the total subversion of the universal world: in which manner they arrived in the Temple, where they were married, which done, they returned with like Triumph to the Palace, where the Tables being covered, they dyned, the Bride and Bride-groom at one Table with the two Kings, and the three Princes; and at another dyned many of their Nobilitie. The dinner done they danced according to their manner, while the Knights, maintainers of the jousts entered the lists. They which that day were Challengers, were the Princes Arsileo, Contumeliano, and a Cousin of his thither came a little before, a very valiant and couragious Knight, called Don Florispiano of Suevia, who being greatly loved of the

Princes, easily obtained the breaking of the first lances, and so ordering himself for it began the jousts, (the Duke with the Princes, and all his company, being mounted on their Theatre) which he performed so gallantly, that ere he lost any Stirrop, he unhorsed thirty Knights; all which according to the order of those jousts hung up their shields, with their armes, one higher than the other, as the Knight of the Golden Image judged his desert, so that many, onely to be counted valianter than his fellow (though they could not vanquish the maintainer) presented themselves against him, that for haste to be before one another, they almost tumbled one upon another, calling him no Knight that did not joust.

At this time there came one unto the Duke from the City gate, and said to him aloud, how there were arrived four Knights, that craved licence to enter, and try their fortune in that joust: for having heard of those Festivals, they came to joy their triumphs. There is no reason we should fear any (said Don Bellianis,) and therefore let them come, for were they Spies they could do little harme. The Knights having this leave, entred, whose gallant semblance drew upon themselves all the gazers eyes, three of them were armed in a rose-colour armour, garnished with many Eagles: The devices on their shields were all of one fashion, the one half white with black Eagles, and the other half black with white Eagles. The other Knight being of a bigger constitution, was all plated in black armour, and on his shield was portraited the wheele of fortune, with a Knight placed on the top thereof, from whence he seemed headlong to tumble down, dragged by the hand of death with this Motto,

Well deserveth such a fall,
Becoming deaths cruel thrall:
That doth attempt so rashly.

He

He ſæmed to be as brave a Knight as ever was any ſæn, (except him of the Golden Image) the Knight being within the Tilt-yard, approached where the Duke Alfiron was, and changing his voice, which the preſent ſtate of thoſe matters urged him to) yet that he might be of all heard, ſaid: Which is the valianteſt and chiefeſt Knight in this aſſembly, whoſe command the reſt obeys? And yet by the immortal Gods, I think every one might rather judge, each of you fitter to command than to be commanded of any.

To which words the mighty King of Armenia replied:
Why do you require it (ſir Knight) whoſe gallant preſence and liberal ſpæch, deſerveth no leſs part in the domination you ſpeak of, than in any thing elſe.

And you may declare your mind to any of us here, having neither more nor leſſe ſuperiority the one than the other, being all equal in the bond of true amity. If it be ſo (ſaid the Knight,) I then demand of you all, to aſſure me you will let us return as we came unknown (the Jouſts finiſhed) and that you require of us nothing againſt our wills.

The Duke Alfiron thus anſwered. You may jouſt when you will (ſir Knight) for the aſſurance you demand, we grant it you, although you næded not to requeſt it, being admitted within our gates.

It is ſo (replied the Knight) but tell me now, which is here the Duke Alfiron? I am he (anſwered the Duke) but wherefore ask you for him? I do enquire for him (replied the Knight) becauſe I thought ſo brave a Knight as he, and this day married, would have maintained the field within the liſts, againſt all adventurers, and not ſit and behold the falling of other Knights.

Theſe words ſome-what moved the Duke, that he was about ſharply to anſwer him, had not the Knight of the Golden Image ſtayed him, who taking the Knight by the hand, very

courteously said. You may (sir Knight) joust when you please, for I assure you, you shall not want whereon to imploy the valour of your mind, else were it a shame, that the Duke should enter the Lists on such a day, having so many good Knights at his command.

Then shall we see the Bounty of these your Knights (replied he in the black armour) whereupon I take my leave, and so went to behold the jousts.

All the Duke's Knights made way, that the four strangers might joust, which they seeing, one of the Knights of the Eagles put himself against Florispiano, who resting his Launce, gave one another so fierce incounters, that Florispiano lost his stirrops, and had fallen, but that he held by his Horses neck, and his adversary measured his length on the ground, and straight his shield was taken from him, and demanding his name, he replied, he had no other than the Knight of the Eagles.

Don Bellianis commanded it to be set higher than all the rest, which so inraged the Black Knight, that he would by no means suffer the other two to joust: but himself choaking with rage, ran against Florispiano, who with the great incounter tumbled to the ground, bravely shivering their Launces in pieces.

The Black Knight prest furiously forward, and recovered one stirrop he had lost, and Florispiano was conveyed out of the Field, and unarmed to take the air, for the closeness of his armour had almost choaked him; but quickly recovering himself, returned to the Scaffold, very glad, as if he that day had done nothing.

The Prince of Phœnicia setting himself against the Black Knight, met both in the middle of their course with such terrible incounters, that the Knight of fortune (for so was he called in the Black armour, doubled backward upon his Horse, but Contumeliano had fallen, if he had not valiantly stayed himself by

by his horſe neck: which went three or four ſteps back, inſomuch that every one thought he would have fallen, but giving him the ſpurs made him furiouſly paſſe forward. Greatly aſtoniſhed were all the beholders, and eſpecially the Knight of the Golden Image, that demanded of his Company if any of them knew that Knight, but none could tell what he was.

The beauteous Perſiana calling the Knight of the Golden Image, ſaid to him ſoftly, that none might hear: you ſhall know (ſir Knight) that it is the Prince Perianeo of Perſia my Brother.

Is it poſſible (ſaid the Knight of the Golden Image?) It is (replied ſhe) for I know him, not only by his incounters, but eſpecially by the ſpæches he uſed to us. Therefore look what you have to do, for certainly he came with intent to kill our Duke Alfiron.

He ſhall not effect his intent ſo (replied the Knight of the Golden Image) for ſo many of us are not here for nothing. And ſo turning to behold the jouſt, commanded his armour ſecretly to be brought him.

But in the mean time Don Contumeliano, and the Knight of Fortune wounded one another with piteous blows, that at laſt the Prince of Phœnicia fell to the Earth from his Horſe.

The Knight of Fortune paſſed forward, though with mighty trouble, for in all his life time he had never received ſo ſtrong and fierce incounters from any. At this time the Prince Arſileo ready to burſt with anger, took the biggeſt Launce he could find, and ſpurred againſt the Knight of Fortune, that alſo came againſt him with incredible Fury, that both brake their Launces in the middle of their ſhield, ſo bravely that only the handles remained in their hands, making the reſt fly in a thouſand ſhivers, higher than the Region of the air: the like they did by the ſecond: but at the third, burning in the choler that one could not overthrow the other,

they

they met with such vehement rigor, staying themselves on their stirrops, and in such anger incountred, that the Prince Arsileo came to the ground over his horse crupper, receiving a monstrous fall: and the Knight of Fortune lost both his stirrops, and with much ado got hold by his horse mane, staying himself most couragiously, rather desireing to dye, than to fall in that place. The Prince Arsileo rose greatly ashamed of his chance before that company. Straight were all the shields of the adventurers taken away, and in their places were only set those of the three challengers: for so commanded the Knight of the Golden Image, who seeing him of Fortune remained sole maintainer, in great hast began to arm himself, commanding his horse to be brought him.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIII.

The end of the Jousts.

WHile things were thus uncertain, there entred the Tilt-yard two brave Knights, both armed in one kind of white Armour; engraven with many Imperial crowns, whose goodly presence highly delighted all the beholders, who coming within the Tilt-yard nær to the Presence, one of them spurred his Courser with such gallantness, that arriving to the Scaffold, where the Ladies and Princes were, he made his Horse bend both his knæs unto the ground, making him passe forward, like to a deadly bullet shot from a Cannons furious mouth.

The other went to the Place where the Knight of the Golden Image was, and as if he knew him, and were joyfull of their mæting, said thus unto him. If you will give us leave (sir Knight) we will try our fortune against yonder Knight, that sæmeth to expect the joust, desireing to save you the labour of arming your self where we be. I repute it as a high favour worthy sir (replied Don Bellianis) besides every one hath liberty to joust, especially your self, whose courage I doubt not but will attempt far higher matters. The Knight humbling himself for that courtesie, said. I beseech you (sir Knight) in courtesie to favour me with your shield, seeing mine cannot defend any encounter. It greatly pleaseth me (replied Don Bellianis) and in lieu whereof you shall leave me yours.

The Knight gave him his; which was pierst in above ten places, by the incounters of lances, though it was of a most fine temper; and taking Don Bellianis shield, went to the Knight of Fortune, and thus began. How shall our fight be (sir Knight?) for

Fortune, and thus began. How shall our fight be (sir Knight:) for I have alwaies seen the victory known onely by the strength of arms, whereby none may be called vanquished but by default of his own valor, which is seldome found in jousting, for often thereon do Knights miscarrie, through the weaknesse of their horses, and not of their force. Belike you crave the Combat at my hand, (said the Knight of Fortune) and not the Jousting; you have understood me right (said the Knight of the Crowns;) for that is it I seek for. The Knight of Fortune (seeing the picture on his adversaries shield, highly to resemble another which he had ingraven in his heart, so greatly desired the combat with him, that he thought long till he began it,) with a loud voice said, Then (sir Knight) be our battel as you will, for I am ready for all things. And so taking a strong Lance from his Page, with a sharp and strong steel'd Pike, came out of the Lists into a broad Field thereby; the like did the Knight of the Crowns. But while they were thus talking, the other Knight of the Crowns demanded of the other Knights of the Eagles, if they would break their Launces with him. They that nothing else desired, yelded thereto, and so departed the one from the other, beginning the gallantest joust that in all that day was to be there seen.

For the Knights of the Eagles were of that best within a great way of them, yet both were overthrown from their Horses, for hardly in the World was known a better Knight for valour than he of the Crowns, whose seemly bountie, was of all admired.

But at this time the two Heroick Warriours, the Knights of the Crowns, and of Fortune, spurring their fierce Coursers against each other, that with their furious noyse, the Earth seemed to tremble and shake under them, met like the Furie of two Tempestuous Currents, that breaking through the Earth to run into the devouring Ocean, and their Shields staying their Launces pierced them through, together with their

their Armour and Coats of Male, both resting wounded on their breasts. The pieces of their Lances mounted higher than the Clouds, themselves meeting with their Horses, bodies, shields and Helms in such manner, that both Horses fell down dead under them, and their masters seemed but in little better case than they, in such a trance they fell, that every one judged them dead. Oh immortall Gods (cryed out the valiant Knight of the Image) what terrible Incounters be these? Dead without doubt are the best Knights this day living, and within himself greatly marvelled to see his shield pierced, which till then could never be penetrated with any Iron. But this effect was wrought by the Armour of the brave Knight of Fortune, against whom no Enchantment prevailed, being forged by the Art of the wise Friston, as hereafter shall be shewn.

And being about to descend to see if the Knights were dead, saw both rise together, who seeing the state wherein they were, more furious than the Tygers of Hercania, came one against the other with drawn Swords in their hands, with whose slicing edges, they wounded one another with their untamed Arms, that they forced their heads to touch their knees by bending: and at last to stay their bodies, set their hands on the ground, and so raising themselves began the cruellest combat, and most dangerous fight, whose like till then the beholders never saw. These Combatants were so enraged against one another, that they should so resist their cutting Blades, which never befell them before. But the courageous Knight of Fortune, that greatly hastened the end of that fight, warding a blow of his brave adversary, with his shield, ran within him, gave him so great a blow that he cut his Armour, with a piece of his flesh, from which wound there issued abundance of blood, and quickly stepping back, thrust at him with his sword, that it pierced all his defensive arms, making him feel the point almost a finger within the flesh.

The Knight of the Crowns feeling himself wounded, and seeing his adversary so nigh him, would not strike him with his sword, but with one of his hands got hold of his shield, and so strongly pluckt him thereby, that he had not time to second any more blows upon him, and letting his sword hang down,

drew his Dagger, and therewith gave him two such Blows, that penetrating his Harnels, they deeply opened his Flesh, that any other but he could no more have fought: The Knight of Fortune, seeing his Enemy so use him, took his Body overthwart in his arms with such Fury, that both had like to have fallen. The Knight of the Crowns did the like, and so strongly pressed each other, that through divers places they lost much blood. In which manner they continued half an Hour, never able to overthrow one another: and so parting asunder, withdrew a while to breath, but with their fight they could scarce stand on their feet, yet walked the best they might, because their wounds might not close with cold blood, lest they should not after end their fight. Who may express the wonder of the gazing multitude to see so fierce a fight, whose like none ever heard of: and with that the night so suddenly came upon them, that they could by no means end their Combat. The Princess Persiana that very well knew her Brother, said to Don Bellianis.

Suffer not (Dear Sir) that such Knights here dye without cause: for if you do, the whole World will blame you for it; besides that, our Royal Vertues will thereby be scandalized with Reproach, to my everlasting Grief, if it should happen. Don Bellianis buckled on his Helm, and mounted upon his Horse, accompanied with all those Kings, Princes, and Lords, who shewed him great Honour, as in the Emperor his Fathers Court he could not have greater; and together they went to the field in the Place where those Knights were fighting, who for all their Reproach, would prosecute their Combat, calling for Knights to end the same: But the Knight of the Golden Image stepping in betwéen them, thus began and said.

These Jousts, Renowned Knights, were began only for pleasure, that our Knights might shew their valour, and not that any controversie should be decided in it by the uncertain end of so cruel a battel, especially betwéen two so brave Knights.

Wherefore seeing the Heroick Vertues of your untamed hearts néeds no farther Experience, having amply shewed the rare strengths of your strong bodies, leaving no time for others to do the like since your coming: In the behalf of this Royal

Company

Company and Knightly presence, and for my own sake I do intreat you to leave this Combat in the state it is, procuring on neither side the end thereof; since neither side may tolerate it, giving no more Honour, nor adjudging no more Praises to the one than to the other. The Knights being as courteous as valiant, adorned with no less Beauty and Bounty, than Courage and fortitude; intreating each other to answer, thinking that he which first replied should be less accounted in leaving of the battel, which neither of them would do, and stood, answering never a Word: which the Knight of the Crowns seeing, requested Don Bellianis to suffer them to finish their Work.

I may not do so (replyed he) and therefore do intreat you to leave it; for I should be reputed of little worth if my intreaties might not prevail with you. The Knight of the Crowns requested him to stand a while aside, till he had spoken with his Adversary, which Don Bellianis doing, the other thus said to the Knight of Fortune. You see (Sir Knight) what great discourtesie ours were, to discontent such Knights, therefore let us leave our battel at this time as it is, and we will end it thirty days hence, where you will; I am content so to do (answered the Knight of Fortune) and let our meeting be in the Valley of the three Fountains, which is three Miles from this City, where you shall find me only with my Page.

This agreed between both, the Knight of Fortune turned to Don Bellianis, saying; Remember (Sir Knight) how against our wills, you disturbed our Combat for this present time, which makes me rest discontented of you. You have no reason to say so (replied Don Bellianis) for I have perceived what hath been done is to your advantage, and if you so think, stay with us, where you shall have your wounds cured to your content, and after I will answer you as you will. I may not stay (answered the Knight of Fortune) but hereafter we may meet when all this may be seen; and so waiting no other answer, mounted upon a Horse which Don Bellianis presented him, and taking his leave, went out the way he came.

And here the History saith, this Knight of Fortune was the Valiant Prince Perianeo, who having understood the estate of those affairs, came with intent to do by the Duke (if he entred

the Jouſts) what he had done by Don Gallaneo, but ſeeing his purpoſe to ſhort otherwiſe, went out of the City, cauſing his Knights to bind his wounds; which done, he never reſted (accompanied with them which were his nigh Allyes) the one called Don Fermoſel of Soldtitia, the Prince of that Iſland, and the other were Brothers, named Don Criſalaneo, and Don Gramaiis, of Thrace till he came to Perſepolis: Where (to be brief) we leave out the great joy the Soldan conceived with their arrival.

That ſtraight many prepared themſelves to march forward, thinking every hour a year, till they might confront their Enemies. And the general joy of all was ſo great for the arrival of their Prince, that it very hardly can be ſet down.

CHAP. XXXIV.

How the Knights with the Imperial Crowns were known to be the Emperor *Don Bel'aneo*, and *Sabian* of *Trebento*: and how the Emperor went to the Valley of the three Fountains, to combat with the Prince *Perianeo* of *Perſia*.

DON Bellianis reſted ſomething male-content after the departing of the Prince Perianeo, thinking he had made little account of him, and was divers times about to follow him, but that he remembred he was ſorely wounded, and ſo let him go, hoping to meet with him ere thoſe Warrs ended, greatly commending his high valour, remaining greatly ſatisfied with the manner of his fight, having never ſeen any Knight that therein more contented him, except the ſame that with him combated; whoſe admirable Courage and Supreme Excellency he not a little admired; and going to him that was going away with his Companions, ſaid; You ſhall not ſo much diſcontent me, Magnanimous Knight, as he did that with you fought; and therefore I earneſtly intreat you to tell me your name, and to remain with us untill your moſt dangerous Wounds be very well cured.

The knowing of my Name is needleſs (Sir Knight) for I ſhall not any way be known, having never wandred theſe parts,

But

But if this will please you, I well unlace my Helm, upon condition you crave no more at my hands against my will.

While they were thus talking, the Prince Arsileo, Don Contumeliano, Florispiano of Suevia, and the Princesses Persiana, and Aurora, with the Duke Alfiron came thither, and thinking he would go, intreated them to stay the curing of their wounds; they humbling themselves for that high Favour, accepted their proffer, and he with whom the Persian Prince had combated took off the Helm, which he no sooner did, but Don Bellianis and Arsileo knew him to be the Emperor Bellaneo, their Lord, whose sight so amazed them, that they thought they saw him in shadow, and not in substance, and their present joy, was so great, that it almost made them discover themselves. And the Emperor seeing them so amazed with Joy, could no longer stay himself, but embracing his Son, said in the Greek Language; What is the thing (Sir Knight) that hath so amazed you? Don Bellianis after his duty done, demanded of him in the same Tongue, what the other Knight was. It is (replied the Emperor) Sabian of Trebento, Son unto the Duke of that County, who came with me out of Constantinople to seek you.

All the rest of those Princes wondred at their acquaintance, insomuch that the gallant Princess Persiana, going nigher them said, with admirable grace: I am very glad (renowned Knights) and we all rest much beholding unto you, that at our intreatings you would suffice our longing desires, in manifesting your old acquaintance, and not conceal your selves in those tumultuous Broyls: and I am right joyful that the Knight of the Golden Image hath been conversant in such good Company, especially so much resembling you in favour, and no less for Valiant Deeds of Haughty Chivalry. The like said many others besides her: for indeed the Prince Don Bellianis so much favoured his Father, that were they both of one Age, hardly might they be distinguished the one from the other. Yet the Emperor Bellaneo was somwhat lower of stature, and bigger set than he, having his face honored with a large beard, something gray, representing a high Majestical gravity, with so pleasing a Countenance, as he excelled all Knights of his age. The Princess Aurora (as afore is expressed,) having seen him in the discovered Castle,

when

when he combated against Don Gallaneo of Antioch, nigh Constantinople, knew him streight, and he her; but seeing how dangerous it might be to discover him, made as though she knew him not, yet thrusting among the Company that talked about him, and seeing him alone, said (that none could hear) I do not doubt but I shall obtain your Graces pardon (most excellent Lord) if I do not shew you that high Honour and Royal entertainment, that your Emperious State and person meriteth, being forced thereto by this times present necessity. The Emperor more narrowly regarding her, recalled her former sight to his remembrance, knowing her to be she that had led away her Son, and lovingly imbracing her, said. Greater is my entertainment by your kind words (Supream Lady) than any other effect that might be done by me, being spoken of so absolute a Lady.

Then was Sabian of Trebento very lovingly received of them all, as if he were their general Brother. And so with the noise of infinite musical, and military Instruments, and an innumerable multitude of lights, they were conducted to the Palace, where the Emperor being laid on a most rich bed, and having his wounds dressed, was left alone to repose his weary Body.

And Don Bellianis taking Sabian of Trebento by the hand, brought him to the Hall, where they were expected by these Princes to supper, with such abundant service, as every one may imagine: where Don Bellianis was demanded by all those Lords, what the Knights were: who said they were his nigh Kinsmen, and that the wounded Knight was his Uncle, whose admired valour they all commended.

May we not know (said the King of Armenia) what the Kt. of Fortune was, that with him did Combat, behaving himself so gallantly therein? We followed him hither (said Sabian of Trebento) for on a Bridge ten Miles hence, jousting with me, at the first encounter my Horse dyed, and after would by no means draw his sword, and so my Companion coming to me, I took my Pages Horse, and both of us followed him, till we heard he was come to the City. But by the way we understood of a Knight, he is Son unto the Sophy of Syconia called the Knight of the three Images. Is it possible (said the Duke of Alfiron) and certainly

certainly I think no less, remembring his words, and had I known it, the matter had otherwise pass'd. And I assure you, I nothing wonder at what he did, for he is the best Knight that ever was in these Countries, therefore it behoves us hourly to expect the Soldan's arrival, for he expected nothing but his coming.

In an ill hour may he resolve to come (said Florispiano) for little is the Harm he now can do us. In such talk they a while were in, till it was bed-time, when giving each other the good Night, were all lighted to their Chambers. The Duke Alfiron and Princess Perliana lay together in a sumptuous Bed, where they set an end to their long tormented Love, consummating all that Night to their great pleasures, though not well content, remembring within what short Time they were to be besieged with so puissant an Host as the Soldan had assembled in Persepolis.

The valiant Knight of the Golden Image, after they were all gone to Bed, went to visit the Watch and Centinels of the City, as his use was to do every Night, and took with him the Prince Arsileo and Sabian of Trebento; that by the way told him, how from Constantinople a great Navy of Ships, with many worthy Knights besides the Emperor, with whom also came out his Brothers, Don Clarineo of Spain, and Don Lucidamore of Thessaly, being first Knighted by their Father, all which Companies had taken their way after him, to the Kingdom of Antioch.

But the Emperor and my self landing by the way in an Island, at our return to the shore found no Ship, being carried away by a sudden storm that arose, and so we stayed there: Ending some adventures till we departed thence, and arriving in this Countrey, came to this City in quest of the Knight of Fortune.

Know you not (said Don Bellianis) what became of the Ships, or were they all sunk in the Tempest? We could learn nothing of them (said he) but our better hope is, they are not all lost. What number of Souldiers brought they (demanded Don Bellianis?) they brought (replyed Sabiano) about 200000 fighting Men, both well appointed, and the Choisest of all the Empire

fire. In this conference they spent the better two parts of the Night, that at length they returned to the Palace, and went to visit the Emperor, with whom they stayed till it was morning, never satisfying himself with asking what had befallen them in that Kingdom. The Prince Don Bellianis discoursed unto him every thing at large, telling him that he greatly wondred that he had taken on him so great toyl, as to come to seek him.

To discharge the Debt I was in (replied the Emperor) for the succour I received at the unknown Castle, both of you, and of your Cousin; for our manner (as you know) is to make satisfaction in the same kind. And yet your Duty was not to go away, not making your selves known. But letting it pass, what was the reason you did so? We could do no otherwise (replyed Arsileo) having promised so to do.

They had thus chatted till the next Morrow if the Emperor had not sent them to Bed: Which they did, lying in that Chamber, and slept till the Sun had the following morning dryed up the cold Dew on the moist Earth. And rising out of their Beds made them ready, and went all together into the Field, where the Jousts were kept, whose Prize the good Knight Sabian of Trebento obtained, with immortall Honour by his brave deeds.

In this manner rested they a Month unmolested of any, by reason of the Boysterous cold Winter, which kept the Soldan from encamping the Host. In which time the Prince Don Bellianis, though he greatly delighted in the Emperor his Fathers Presence, whom all the rest called the Knight of the Crowns, sustained such grievous passions and torments of woe for the Absence of his dear Lady, that he often swouned to the Death: nothing with him prevailing the consolating words of his Damsels, nor the Princess Aurora, to whom he made known his grief.

But every day grew worse and worse, which the Emperor his Father seeing (armed himself upon a day, though he could hardly do it) being not altogether well, walked with him out of the City, and enquired of him very earnestly the cause of his Melancholick Griefs, charging him not to conceal it by any means.

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The Prince Don Bellianis told him, he knew not whence procéded his grief, but that he felt extream anguish of mind, but could not tell the cause thereof. The Emperor perceiving some love-passion tormented him, having many times seen him sigh without any cause, overpast that talk, and said. Tell me whereabouts is the Valley of the three Fountains, for I must néeds go thither. It is some three miles hence (said Don Bellianis) whither we may make an easie walk. Whereupon the Emperor took a Lance from his Sons Dwarf, and sending him with his own Page back to the City, they went toward the Valley.

The Prince demanded of his Father why he went thither? You shall know, said he, I have ingaged my self to the combat there, with the Persian Prince this day, and I am determined to méet him there alone, without any company, for so we agréed, and therefore here we must part, for we must not go together. Don Bellianis grieved that the Emperor had undertaken so dangerous a fight, and the more because he might not go to aid him if any sinister chance should befal.

But séeming to fear nothing, said; I will obey your command (dear Lord) séeing you will have it so, and will return unto the City, and excuse you till you come back. And so shew'd him the valley, and departed something better satisfied to sée what little account the Emperor made of the Battel; yet he resolved to frustrate it, as hereafter shall be shown.

But here we leave them, till we have set down the matter contained in the ensuing Chapter, which greatly availeth this History.

CHAP. XXXV.

Who the Sage *Friston* was, and what he did that the Battel between those Princes might not be effected.

IN the Kingdom of Persia, where then all those Knights were, dwelt a wise man, which was he that writ this great History, called Friston, whose equal in the Magick Art, the World contained not, excelling therein all those of his time: for they procured to learn of him. This Rare Ma-

gician was so great a friend to the Persian Prince Perianeo, that all his labour and study was to no other effect, but for the good Success of his Affairs; consuming the greatest part of his time to that end. For which purpose, he had given him a most Excellent, Rich, and well tempered Sword, that the like was not within the Earthly Continent, except that of Don Bellianis, which before times appertained to that Valourous Knight Jason, the which that excellent Enchantress Medea had given him, when they enjoyed their loves, which she forged under the Constellation and Predominance of such Planets, that no Enchantment might against it prevail.

This Sword procured the Sage Fristone for the use of the Prince Perianeo, but he never could obtain it, because Medea by her Prophecies had bequeathed it to the successive Heirs of the House of Greece, placing it where Don Bellianis won it, by means of the Sage Bellona. But this wise Fristone being in the desert of death, where he made his Habitation, he there calling to mind the Persian Prince, came to know, that for all his Valour was so excellent, and very few that might equal him in strength, he notwithstanding might incur wondrous danger. And casting about with his Art to know the end of the battel, the Almighty God would not suffer him to find out the success thereof, reserving to his Divine Majesty the knowledge of the event of all things, which to none others might be permitted, and the more he sought to know it, the further he was from it. Which thing so confounded him in his imagination, that he could not think what it might be. Wherefore he resolved by all means to disturb the fight, judging that afterward the Persian Prince might better revenge himself upon the Duke Alfiron, for the injury he had done his Father, and therefore Devised, what you shall know in the next Chapter.

Chap.

CHAP. XXXVI.

What *Don Bellianis* did, being gone from the Emperor, and how he combated with the *Persian* Prince, and were parted by the means of the Sage *Friston*: and how the *Souldans* Host besieged the City of *Bollera*.

DON Bellianis being departed from the Emperour his Father, so spurred his Horse, that quickly he returned to the City, wherein he entred very quiet, shewing no manner of alteration, but telling every one, that by the way inquired of him for the Knight of the Crowns, that he stayed not far thence for Sabian of Trebento his companion. He entred the Palace, and meeting with Sabian, he requested him to lend him his Armour to supply his present need. May not I accompany you (said he?) No (replyed Don Bellianis) besides, I will presently return. Where left you my Lord the Emperor (demanded he?) Hard by (replyed the Prince) staying for me. Which said, he buckled on Sabians Armour, which nothing differed from his Fathers: and mounting a Horse-back, he took his way to the Valley of the three Fountains, to meet with the Persian Prince, and coming to a large Plain, he espyed the Emperor lying under a Tree. But taking another way, stayed at a place through which the Knight must of necessity pass, if he came; whose coming he attended, walking on his Horse, and revolved with himself what he had to do, and remembring that Knight loved his Lady, he thought therein he stood disgraced, which so moved his desire to Encounter him, that he judged himself so unfortunate, that the said Prince would rather break his promise than come. Wherein he was greatly deceived, for he rather would indure a thousand deaths, than to falsifie his ingaged word. For the day before he marched from Persepolis, with all his Troops, containing above three hundred thousand Horsemen besides Footmen, that covered all the Mountains & Plains they passed by; and he so set forth with the manner of his March, that none could scape to advertize his Adversaries thereof: on whom he arrived with such a sudden fury, that it had not been much if

they had taken the City at their first assault, but that those valiant Knights were within, whose strength supplyed the want of a competent Army to resist their Foes; and issuing forth in the Cities defence, began so fierce and bloody a Battel as ever was seen.

The Princes Arsileo, Contumeliano, and the Kings of Armenia, with the Duke Alfiron, went out of the City into their Camps, through a secret Dor, accompanied with all the rest of the chiefest Knights, which they found in some danger by the adverse multitudes; with whose coming on all sides they began such a cruel massacring of their men, that within a while, the Earth was died with Humane blood, and covered with dead bodies, slain by their furious Arms; which the Prince Perianeo seeing, thought he could have no better occasion to depart secretly to the Valley of the three Fountains, where he knew the Knight of the Crowns expected him to end their former quarrel, and that he might the better pass unknown, he had put on a Sanguine Armour, without any device on his shield; in which manner he went till he came to the place where Don Bellianis stayed, whom he thought did then but come, seeing him walk about, and very glad, cryed out, he should there stay, for it was a place convenient for their Combat.

Don Bellianis turning about, and seeing him so altered in his Armour, knew him not, (but that he thus said) I am the Knight that hath established this combat with you this day: for which we are now in a good place, where none shall disturb us. You come so disguised (replied Don Bellianis) that I knew you not. But I am right glad we are so well met, to end our commenced enterprize. But first tell me (said the Persian Prince) since one, or both of us shall here remain, what you are? and how you are called? and I promise to do the like. It doth not please me (replied the valiant Prince Don Bellianis) for I well know you are the Renowned Perianeo Prince of Persia. Then if not so (answered the Persian Prince) satisfie me with knowing the cause why you bear Portrayed the Picture of that Divine Lady in your Shield? It is the shadow (replied Don Bellianis) of the Celestial Substance, that Imperates my Heart and Soul, and therefore do I continually bear it with me. Oh uu-

unhappy Knight, shall any in the world dare to say any such thing in thy presence? and with a fiery choler that gnaw'd his Heart, he turn'd his Horse to take his full carær in the field: The like did Don Bellianis, mæting in the middle of his course with such admirable force and lightness, that they seemed more to fly, than on the ground to run. Oh who would not have desired to sée this fight betwixt the flower of the Worlds Chivalry, here opposed one against the other? For the Prince Perianeo had not his like on the Universe, except Don Bellianis and his Father; and yet his Father had Princes, his Brothers, though they were Knighted, had not used their Arms. But to return to our former discourse.

The two Combatants encountred each other, with such impetuous and suddain strength, that their Lances being big and knotty, and their Forces without compare: All their defensive Armour was pierced, and their Lances past betwæn their left sides and arms, and mæting body with body, shields and Helms together made so Huge a noise, as if two Towers had met. Don Bellianis lost his stirrops: but the Prince Perianeo if he had not quickly got hold by his Horses neck, he had surely gone to the ground, making many signs of falling; yet governed with implacable Rage, He bravely recovered his stirrops, turning toward Don Bellianis, that also made against him, and regreeting one another with such rigorous blows, that all the Valley did resound with the noise, so cruel were they; and where their swords lighted, from thence it carried Armour and flesh; and laid so fast upon one another, that they had no time to ward any blow with their shields. In this manner laboured they above four hours, being so wounded, that it would have made any Adamantine breast to pity them; and not speaking any word, withdrew apart to breath.

The Prince Perianeo thus with himself began: Is it possible that the envious stars that governed the fatal hour of my birth, should make me thus unhappy, to hear a Knight in my presence say he loves thy Lady, and that thou art not able to satisfie that proud fault, with the deerest blood of his stout heart, but suffer him to bring thæ to such a point, as to wish the pitiless stroke of an impartial cruel death; and this Knight is inchanted

chanted, or I am deceived if his forces be not now far greater than the other time I tryed them; and neither toil nor labour doth diminish them. But oh imperious Governels of my afflicted soul: what is he shall tell thee, that this thy Knight dieth, confelling the immoveable faith he owes thée, having left no hope evermore to sée the glorious splendor of thy divine beauty. But yet the revolving Heavens dispose the resolution of my destined fate as they please; yet one of us ere we dye, shall confess the other worthy of thy service. On the otherside Don Bellianis walking, and considering with himself the valour of his Adversary, imagining he never felt crueller blows (but of his Father) and that his forces more and more increased, and recording the cause of his fight, thus of himself complained. Oh Don Bellianis, unworthy to be called Knight and Lover of so Divine a Princess, to suffer another Knight thus to let thee blood, and not to make his tributary life do homage to thy sword, whereby thou hast lost both the Honour and title of a Knight, unless thou recoverest it by making his deaths passage through his life. With the end of which words, he became so inraged, that his Heart seemed to burn in the fiery coles of his ireful brest, and so redoubled his most furious courage, that if there had been four such Knights as the Persian Prince before him, he would in short time reduce them all to the mercy of his mortal blade. With which betwixt both Hands he went against his Love-crossing Adversary, which did the like also, and raising his Medean sword aloft, to descend it with a more fury, there appeared before him a Lady altogether like to Her, whose Picture hath with cruel yoke subjugated his commanding Heart, which said unto him. What do you here (renowned Prince of Greece) know you not your love that is toward me, cannot take any effect, if first you free me not from this danger?

And therewith he thought he saw four monstrous Gyants, like a Whirle-wind snatcht her away, and that one dragged her Amber-guilded hair with such barbarous savageness, that his unconquered Heart resolved to liquid blood at the cruel, yet a pitiful sight: and moreover another following them, cryed out, let me alone with that vile wretch, for she must dye by my Hand. Which that valiant Prince Don Bellianis seeing, not respecting

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ing the fight, purſued the illuſion which he ſaw, which took the way down the Valley. Hereupon his fine Armour with the deviſe of the Imperial Crowns, loſt their Hew, becoming like thoſe that the Prince Perianeo did wear at the Jouſts in Bollera.

The Perſian Prince, that nothing of that had ſeen, thinking his Adverſary had left the Battel for ſome other reaſon, began to follow him, but ſuddenly his Reins were taken out of his Hands, and looking about to ſee who ſhould do ſo, ſaw before him the deareſt friend he had, the Sage Friſton, who thus ſaid unto him.

What is the matter (dear Prince of Perſia) that you follow whom you know not, nor whether it be your advantage ſo to do? Take my counſel, return to Bollera, for I have laid ſuch a ſnare for him, that you ſhall be fully revenged on your Enemies, and therefore follow not that Knight. So this ſaid, he vaniſhed away.

The Perſian Prince was greatly amazed hereat, and ſo great was his Hate againſt the valiant Knight of the Imperial Crowns, that he was about to follow him: yet notwithſtanding, reſolving the contrary, returned to his Fathers Camp, where arriving, he found the battel ſtill to endure very fierce, into which he thruſt himſelf, to help his men. Where we leave him, till we have expreſt what happened to Don Bellianis, purſuing thoſe Inchantments.

CHAP. XXXVII.

How *Don Bellianis* following the Sage *Friſtons* Inchantments, combated with the Emperor his Father in the Valley of the three Fountains: and how *Don Bellianis* was led away by the wiſe *Bellona*, to end a certain Inchantment.

The Prince Don Bellianis, as is ſaid, purſued thoſe Giants, whom he thought carried priſoner the Princeſs Florisbella, in which purſuit he had remained inchanted by the ſage Friſton, had it not been for his Sword, yet was he by him deceived, ſeeming otherwiſe than he was, which was all the Magitians could do. And going along, he eſpied a Knight, armed as he thought

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in the Persian Princes Armour, with whom he not long before fought. And so soon as they approached together, all those Inchantments vanished away: whereat like one amazed, wakened out of some dream, stood still. But the Knight that came up the Valley was his Father, who had by Friston's device his Armour changed. For that of Don Bellianis seemed like the Knights of Fortune; and the Emperors nothing differed from the same. Who seeing him come in haste, and without a Lance, left his own, and drawing forth his sword, went to meet him with it raised aloft. Don Bellianis doing the like; there began between them the cruellest fight that all that day was fought, making their Heads bow to the Saddle-pummel with their terrible strokes, so fast redoubling blow upon blow, that they struck fire out of their Armour, and made them often lose the sight of one another.

Don Bellianis seeing the cutting Sword descend with such fury, spurred his Horse forward, and closing with him ere he could discharge his blow, took him 'twixt his strong arms, and lifting him out of his Saddle, shaking the Stirrops from his own feet, he leapt with him on the ground, where he opened both Armour and flesh with one mighty blow. But overcome with rage, both at one time raised their slicing Swords, which falling with such strength, the Emperor had the Buckler of his Helm cut, which fell on the Earth, and his sword descending on his left arm, it made there a grievous wound: But Don Bellianis was so overladen with the Emperors blow, that he was forced to set both Knees and Hands on the ground, and the Emperor seeing himself without the Helm, struck his adversary so suddenly again, with such fury, that he sorely wounded him on the left shoulder, and the sword ran three Handfuls into the earth. But Don Bellianis never losing any spark of his admirable courage at any sinister accident, raised himself upon his feet, and turned upon the Emperor ere he had time to draw his sword from the ground. At this instant was the Emperors life in wondrous danger, being without Shield and Helm, and not able to recover his sword so soon as he should. And Don Bellianis being on foot with his sword raised with both Hands, and ready to discharge it, did suddenly know him, and with the greatest wonder that ever before he was in, cryed out. Oh

Oh Almighty God, in whom I believe, is it poſſible my hands ſhould commit ſo hainous treachery? And therewith ſtaid his hand.

The Emperor hearing theſe words, ſaid: Know you me Sir Knight? or what is the reaſon you end not your fight? whereunto Don Bellianis replyed. I do moſt humbly beſeech you my dear Lord and Emperor, even by that Lord that hath permitted we ſhould not die by ſo great deceits, that you omit and pardon this my error, wherein I am guilty of no fault committed againſt you. And having ſaid ſo, unlaced his Helm, whereat the Emperor ſtraight knew him, which ſtruck him into ſo great an anguiſh to ſée his dear Son ſo cruelly wounded by his hands, that he was fain to ſit him down, not being able to ſtand on his legs, loking like a man ready to breath his laſt.

Don Bellianis thinking his wounds were the cauſe of it, ſate himſelf down, lamenting that unhappy chance, loſing their blood ſo faſt, that it made two Channels, as if they proceéded from two riſing ſprings, and overtaken by the darkſom night, were put into ſo great fear, that they deſpaired of remedy. Eſpecially Don Bellianis doubting thereby his Fathers life, who becauſe the ſudden amazement more troubled him than the danger of his wounds, quickly recovered himſelf, and imbracing the Prince his Son, ſaid:

O dear Son! tell me I pray you, why came you armed in the Armour of the Knight of Fortune? did he peradventure die by your hands? or how is it? for I cannot expreſs the alteration I ſuffer till I know it.

I wear the Arms of Sabian of Trebento, and no others: for thoſe of the Perſian Prince your ſelf wears. I have not changed mine, ſaid the Emperor. But tell me what hath befallen you ſince you ſaw me, for ſurely we have béen wonderouſly deceived.

Don Bellianis told it him. Whereupon the Emperor ſpake. Surely we have béen inchanted, and yet cannot tell by what means; but this is the ſtrangeſt caſe I ever heard of, that both ſhould ſeem to wear one kind of Armour, and not perceive it. It may be, that Lady that cryes to you for help was ſhe that ſo deceiv'd us. But let's depart from hence, for we loſe much blood.

When they were upon going, they espy'd coming toward them an ancient Matron conducted by four monstrous Gyants, before them carried a Pillar of fire, which lighted them their way; they came in such haste, that ere they could rise she was upon them, whom presently the Gyants took from her Palfrey, and kneeling before the Emperor, she required his Royal hands to kiss them. The Emperor took her up, and she unmasking her self was soon known of Don Bellianis to be the sage Bellona, his dear friend; whereat conceiving as much pleasure as before displeasure, and accounting his danger none, imbracing her, said: What hap brought you hither (my good friend) at such a time, which is not without some special cause. The great love I bear to you, and the Emperor your Father (replyed she) is the cause thereof.

But you incur great peril through your wounds; eat this that I will give you, for with the like medicine you were before cured: they did so, and were therewith presently well, as if they had no hurt at all, and their Armour returned unto their former colour and devices. The Emperor embracing her, said: For Gods sake (Lady) tell me this adventure, for it doth more amaze me than any thing in my life. I will (replyed she,) and hardly shall you know it of any but me. You well remember the combate you agreed with the Persian Prince: now know he had to his friend a great Magician, in that art the skilfullest in all the world; this man knowing the great danger his friend should pass with the Prince your Son, did ordain all which you have seen, changing both your Armours that you might slay one another, each of you thinking you fought with the valourous Prince Perianeo: And trust me, his desire had taken effect, had it not been for Don Bellianis sword, which for that purpose the wise Medea, many years before kept in the Cave where Don Bellianis won it, being the man she wished might have it, always desiring to benefit the house of Greece, as often heretofore she hath done. For so it was written, where your Son found the Sword, if he doth remember the words. I do very well remember them (replyed Don Bellianis) for thus they said:

This Propheſie is mentioned in the ſecond Chapter, and here explained with effect.

That with this Sword the living ſhould be loſt, and the dead in poſſeſſion of the recovered, and they reſtored to their Royal blood, with knowledge of their poſſeſſors. You ſee now how it hath come to paſs: and moreover they ſaid, this ſhould be.

At the ſame time when the fierceneſs of the couragious Lyons, which are you two, by the greatneſs of his skill, which is that of the wiſe man, called Friſtone, that in knowledge equals her, becauſe he hath all her books, ſhould be put in greater fear, (but this knew not he, for he did not look whether the Sword were won, or no, or if the valourous Prince your Son did wear it) Then the living which were loſt (that are you two, that being living were loſt, by the alteration of your Armour; and ſuppoſing you already dead, it would have hapned, if the fight had been ended with the blow of this ſword that cut the Laces of your Helm) were put in poſſeſſion of your recovered ſelves, being reſtored to your royal bloods (which was at the point to have been loſt.) And the true poſſeſſors known (which are both you) taking one another for the Perſian Prince.

Now I hope you underſtand the Adventure you have paſt, which not without cauſe you account ſtrange. Greatly wondred the Knights at the Ladies words, who again ſaid. But for another cauſe hath my coming been, which is to have with me the Prince Don Bellianis your dear Son, whom I muſt preſently uſe in a dear imploy, which no leſs concerns him than his life.

Take us both with you (ſaid the Emperor.) I would willingly do it (replyed ſhe) but that the Duke Alfiron greatly needeth your help, and therefore it is no reaſon to leave him alone, your Son ſhall quickly return again. And here do as I counſel you, for I well knew this would happen, which made me write unto you, that you would by no means depart from the City of Conſtantinople, but you would do it, and it had not been much if you had loſt your life. I will not go againſt your counſel (replyed the Emperor) but tell me if my Son ſhall quickly return:

He shall (said she) and therefore go to the City as soon as you can; and so making Don Bellianis mount on horse-back, who had taking the Emperors blessing, who with many tears did give it him, departed as swift as the wind, leaving the Emperor so busied with imaginations, whither his Son might be carried, that he knew not what to resolve himself.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

How the Emperor returned to the City of *Bollera*, and what hapned to him in the *Soldan*'s Camp, before he entred into the City.

The Emperor remembring the Sages words, took his Lance and mounted on horse-back, approaching the City of Bollera almost by break of day, which he found beset with such multitudes, that he wondred at their so sudden arrival; and not knowing on which side the Duke lay intrenched, because the City was besieged round; he rushed among those Tents as if he had bèn one of the Centinels, and so went till he came unto a great Pavilion, which he thought to be the General of those Troops, and loking into it, he saw many Knights talking with another that lay in his bed, whom he judged according to this manner and condition, to be the Sophy, and hard by him he espyed armed without his helm the Prince of Persia, that had bèn cured after the same manner that he was, their conference was, that it would be good to give another assault to the City, if it were but to affright them within, it would not be amiss. And the Emperor being busie in hearkning to this, there came unto him a Knight that was Collonel of that Court of Guard, and said: What do you here, you are not in your quarters? I was walking about (said the Emperor) and stay'd to lok upon this Tent. And therefore shall you go to prison (replyed the other) seeing you have no more care. The Emperor said, let us go whither you will. Hereupon the Collonel turned to four Knights, and charged them to convey that Knight to his Tent. Which they going to do, the Emperor sorely wounded, overthrew them one after another to the ground with his Lance, and about to do the like to the Collonel, he thrust himself

ſelf among the Tents, calling for help. But the Emperor that hereat became furious, reached his Lance at the Soldan (that lay in bed) with ſuch force, raiſing himſelf on his ſtirrops, which if it had gone ſtraight he had no more need to make War; yet it miſſed him ſo little, that the Lance paſs'd betwixt his arm and his ſide, and ran through all the bedding, nailing it above a handful in the ground. Which the Knights ſeeing that were talking with him, gathered about him, thinking he had been ſlain, and ſome went out to ſee what he was that had been ſo hardy to do ſuch a deed: amongſt whom was the Prince Perianco.

But the Emperor thinking it no wiſdom to oppoſe himſelf against ſo many, cloſely thruſt among thoſe Knights that were come thither; and ſo paſs'd till he came to the farther ſide of the Camp, at ſuch time that the Sun began to appear, and fearing that ſome might meet him and know him, and ſo fruſtrate his intent, he ruſhed with great violence upon the Guard on that ſide, and maugre their force, he paſſed through the midſt of them, leaving above twenty piteouſly wounded on the Earth. And at length arrived in his own Camp, where being ſtraight known, was with great gladneſs received, and ſo entred the City, where the Duke and all the reſt joyfully welcomed him; and being asked for the valiant Knight of the Golden Image, he replyed, he departed from him at the Valley of the three Fountains, and would quickly return.

So leaving them, he went to reſt himſelf, for he greatly needed it. The Prince Perianco being come forth of the Tent, fearing his Father had been ſlain, enquiring for him that had done it, came to the place where the Emperor had made the ſlaughter; there he found ſome dead, ſome grievouſly wounded, ſome hardly could live long, and demanded who had ſo wounded them; they replyed they knew not, ſave that a diveliſh Knight clad in Armour, bearing certain Crowns upon his ſhield, had done thoſe wonders, and in deſpight of us all hath entred the City of Bollandra.

By this the Prince knew the Knight that would have ſlain his Father, was he with whom he did combate, though he much doubted it, becauſe his dear friend the wiſe Friſion had told him, he would ſet him in a place where he ſhould leave both

Honour

Honour and life: yet discontented and amazed, he turned to the Tent, where he found the Soldan up, whereat he greatly rejoyced, and with no little gladness, demanded how he felt himself, and whether the Lance had done him any harm? None (replyed the Soldan) but what I conceived with fear of death; and I assuredly think that was the Knight of the Golden Image, for none else could have the heart to do it. So great is the bounty of this Knight (replyed the Prince) that none might do it but he. In these words you shall see it (answered the Soldan) for he that doth not see his deeds will hardly believe them, my self having seen him perform so Haughty Acts of Chivalry, else none should perswade me that any humane creature could atchieve them: For he being wounded, slew the horrible Dragon of the Ryphean Desart, and the King of Cyprus assuring you that when he entred with him in the Lists, the blood issued 'twixt the joynts of his Armour from his old wounds: He also discovered the adventure of the Despair of Love, with many other things which of him you have heard. I long to try (replyed the Prince) how far his valour doth extend. For I know not whether it be a Knight that did disturb me from ending a certain Combate, and if it be he, I do protest to procure all means till I meet with him.

Do you know him? (said the Soldan) Yes (replyed the Prince) for yesterday I did combate with him in the Valley of the three Fountains. But how did you with him? (said the Soldan) My friend the Sage Friston did part us, answered Perianeo. In such like continued they till the ensuing morrow, advertising the whole Camp to be in readiness against the next assault.

The Duke Alfiron and the Kings, seeing the Knight of the Golden Image come not, they altogether very sorrowfully intreated the Emperor to take the general charge over them all: which he did, though unwillingly. And having heard his Enemies intent, taking with him the Prince Arsileo, and Sabian of Trebento, he mustred all his men, dividing them into five squadrons. The first he committed to the leading of the Phœnician Prince, and with him his valiant Cousin Florispiano, with two thousand well appointed Knights. The second he committed to the Duke of Alfiron, with all his men which were

were as many. The third led the Kings of Armenia and Tellisanty. The fourth conducted Sabian of Trebento. And the fifth governed a Brother of the Dukes called Sallatel of the valley, and for himself he would have none. The Prince Perianeo divided his Troops in six Battalions, and every one of fifty thousand, and gave order that the other fifty thousand, with all the footmen should assault the City, which were above forty thousand, with so many Military Engines, that they made sure account to lay it level with the ground, with utter desolation of all their Knights at their first encounter.

CHAP. XXXIX.

The cruel Battel fought between the Dukes Camp, and the *Soldan's* Troops, and what therein hapned: with the strange acts the Emperor *Don Bellaneo* performed, and the terrible assaults given to the City.

THe cold gloomy Winter being over-blown with the warm approach of the wanton Spring, wherein the amorous passions in the hearts of love-oppressed Knights, began to stir up the almost extinguished flames, and chiefly in them that hoped for little remedy for their grief, continually contemplating in the perpetual captivity of their alienated Lords; when Perianeo the Persian Prince, determining speedily to terminate those Wars, in strong Battalions, drew forth all his men in field, which were so gallant and seemly, as never was seen in those parts, with such diversity of devices, Scutchions, Ancients and Flags about their Spears displayed in the Air, made a most gallant shew together, with the brightness of their Armour, and the Sun-beams reverberating on them, seemed so many Christaline glasses, and the clamorous noise of such multitudes being so adverse, required a Captain of no less valour than his they had. Where though they were very quiet, yet the neighing and trampling of their horses, with their Masters guiding them, raising such rebounding Ecchо, that they could not hear one another.

The Emperor Don Bellinis, like the man that had been in far more dangerous Enterprises than those, taking with him

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the Prince Arſileo (the better to range about the battel) drew in field his furious ſquadrons, and perceiving the Sun when he roſe ſhined againſt their enemies faces, dazling their eyes with his brightneſs; which fell out well to his advantage: and not willing to loſe any opportunity, paſſing to the formoſt ſquadron, with furious manner commanded they ſhould ſet upon them, keeping themſelves together, leſt their adverſaries breaking through them ſhould diſorder their ranks. And thereupon couching their Lances, encountred their Enemies, that were ſo blinded with the Sun, that they ſaw them not come. But the Emperors men ſo bravely gave the onſet, that their adverſaries could not break their files on no ſide, whereupon the ſlaughter was ſo great, that in leſs than half an hour that ſquadron was wholly overcome, and leaving behind them above 30000 ſlain and wounded. The valiant acts that the Emperor in the mean time performed, are hard to believe: he with ſuch valiancy brake through the middle of thoſe ranks, as the reapers uſed in July to reap the harveſt of their ripened grain, ſo he left on the ground ſo many, head by head, that none durſt confront him. The Prince Perianeo ſeeing the diſorder of his men, took with him Don Fermoſel, and the two Brothers, Criſalaneo, and Gramalis of Thrace, with thirty monſtrous Gyants, and paſs'd to the ſecond Squadron, and gathering the remnant of his diſperſed men, encountred the Emperor, commanding all his Troops together to aſſault the other ſide of the battel. But the Emperor quickly perceiving his meaning, and calling Floriſpiano, ſet him to tell the Duke Alfiron, he would command the whole battel to unite himſelf with him, giving no time to his adverſaries to recover the advantage they had over them; and that it ſhould be with the greateſt ſpeed poſſible, for therein conſiſted the days victory, ere the Sun mounted aloft.

Which was done ſo ſuddenly, that they almoſt met their enemies. The Perſian Prince perceiving what his adverſaries had done, fearing to be put to flight, commanded all his Squadrons to do ſo, and ſpying Sabian of Trebento (which then entred the battel) thinking him to be Knight of the golden Image becauſe he did wear his Armour, couched his Lance againſt him, who did the like, meeting with ſuch force, that they were forced

to

to hold by their Horſes Necks. Perianeo alighted to kill him, but Sabian that was already on his feet, gave him ſo great a blow that he ſtaggered four ſteps backwards; yet ſo many laid upon him with ſuch heavy blows, that though he valiantly defended himſelf, yet hardly had he eſcaped with life, if that the noiſe had not brought the Emperor, with the Prince Contumeliano, and Arſileo, Floriſpiano, the Duke Alfiron, and the King of Armenia, with many other choſen Knights. On the other ſide, there arrived the Soldan with twenty Gyants in his company; with him alſo came Coroliano and Boraldo, where there began ſo great a fight, that all the other Battel was nothing in Compariſon of that; but the couragious Emperor ſeeing his dear Sabiano in ſuch peril, in deſpight of them all went where he was fighting, and not knowing who Perianeo was, overturn'd him to the ground with his horſe breaſt, and alſo tumbling down a Gyant, took his Horſe and gave it Sabiano, ſaying, mount upon this Horſe Knight, if you mean to live: which he did very lightly, though he was ſore wounded, and with his mortal blows, they quickly cut their paſſage through their Enemies: the Prince Perianeo with extream rage fomed like a chafed Boar, taking a Horſe, turned againſt him who had overthrown him; but ere he did it, the Soldan and the Duke Alfiron meeting and knowing each other, diſcharged two ſuch blows upon themſelves, that their Heads were both wounded, from whence came much Blood. The Duke had incurred much danger if the Emperor had not arrived with his Company, who knowingthe Soldan, came ſo nigh, that raiſing his ſword to ſtrike him on the head, being ſo cloſe unto him, did no otherwiſe, but with the Hilts threw him off his Horſe, and going after to kill him, was over-reached backwards by the Prince Perianeo with ſo cruel a blow, that he had near fallen down. Coroliano wounded him alſo upon the left ſhoulder. Whereupon there began ſo cruel a fight between them, that on both ſides four thouſand Knights loſt their lives. On this ſide where the Emperor was, his Men held out couragiouſly with long fighting. But on the other ſide the Emperors Men loſt their advantage, being unable to reſiſt their Enemies. At this Time the aſſault given to the City being ſo fierce, that infinite of men dyed, that currents

of blood ran through the field; and being few within to defend the City, it easily might have been taken. But there came a Knight to the Emperor, and said: Withdraw your self Sir, unless you will have us all destroy'd, for they within the City have need of present help. Is it possible (said the Emperor?) Assure your self (replied the Knight) if the City be taken, we are utterly undone. But the Emperor gathering his men in form of Pyramids, defending them in such sort, that they entred safely into their Trenches, where the Emperor leaving sufficient Guard, made most of his men enter the City to defend it; where, because the assault of the wall might somewhat slacken, opened one of the Gates, which he and the Phœnician Prince, and Florisspiano valourously kept, by whose Hands many there dyed, with ten of the terriblest Gyants in all the adverse Camp. But being overtaken with the darkness of the night, they returned to their Tents; the like did the Emperor, King, and Princess, leaving a good Guard in the City, returned to the Palace, where they were received with much joy by the Princess Persiana and Aurora, the one for grief to see those wars, the other wanting the presence of her dear friend, the Prince Don Bellianis. But supper being ended, the Emperor withdrawing himself to his Chamber, was taken apart by the Princess Aurora, who said unto him.

I beseech your Majesty tell me what is become of Don Bellianis, for I fear some disastrous accident has befallen him. The Emperor to comfort her, told her all that had hapned in the valley of the three Fountains, and how the Sage Bellona had taken him with her. Now am I glad (said the Princess) for I am assured he will have no harm in her company: and so giving one another the good night, departed: the Emperor to his chamber, and she to hers, with the Princess Florisbella's Ladies, who were very sorrowful for the absence of the Knight of the Golden Image. The Princess told them, the wise Bellona had taken him with her, which were some better news for them. In came fresh supply unto the Soldan, with which he every day assaulted the City, sometimes winning, and sometimes losing, as in such accidents is often seen. But they within the City receiving no aid, had commonly the worst. Where we leave them,

them, till we have dilated the ſtrange Adventures of the Knight of the Golden Image, conducted by the wiſe woman.

CHAP. XL.

What hapned the Knight of the Golden Image, going with *Bellona*: and how he proved the Adventure of *Brandezar* on the *Nyconian* Mountains.

IN manner above expreſſed, the Knight of the Golden Image poſted with ſuch ſwiftneſs, that by the next morning Sun, he found himſelf upon a high Mountain, the barreneſt that ever was ſeen, and turning to the ſage Bellona, with whom thitherto he had not ſpoken, ſaid unto her. Tell me Lady, what Country is this where we are: for I aſſure you I never ſaw worſe. We are now (replied ſhe) in the Kingdom of Ægypt, on the Mountains of the King Nycaon, and here muſt you end an Adventure, which will be for your eternal benefit, excelling all that ever you have done. And therefore know that this Kingdom in times paſt being the mightieſt Monarchy over the world, many years; in which time there ſwayed the Empire a worthy Knight called Nycaon, by whoſe name this Mountain is called. This King was at jar with another, named Brandezar, Emperor of Babylon, who ſo purſued him, that he was fain to immure himſelf within a ſtrong City hard by the River Euphrates, where Brandezar begirt him with a fearful ſiege, and hoping of no remedy to obtain his liberty, was driven to uſe his Art, being the greateſt Magician in his time that ever had bæn before him, and reſolved to do what you ſhall now hear.

One night by his Art he went to Brandezar's Camp, and cauſed him to be brought upon this Mountain: But firſt he called his Subjects together, and counſelled them to compound with thoſe Caldeans and Babylonians, for he had determined to leave them, becauſe his enemies ſhould not execute their revenge on him. His Subjects, that greatly loved him, with great ſorrow intreated him to ſtay, and ſæ how they would ſpend their lives in his ſervice. But he promiſing them quickly to return, aſſured them he would eaſe them of their grief cauſed by Brandezar. And ſo he did: for coming hither, he wrought

such Enchantments upon him, that he remained in the greatest torments that any tongue can express: and thinking that if by his Enchantments he lost his understanding and senses, he should not be revenged at his pleasure, resolved to leave him in his perfect wits: and for that cause Enchanted a Ring, with such virtue and Conjuration, that he which on his finger wears it, should never be offended with any Enchantment, but enjoy his true senses, with all his Heart could wish, saving bodies imprisonment. This might he well do, as the only Man that in this Art tutored Medea, being never equalled in this Science. And a while after, that he knew his Vassals were quitted, minded to return, and descending this mighty Mountain, met with his valiant Brother, who in his absence was crowned King.

Nycaon (as is said) meeting him, ran to embrace him. But his Brother busie with other Imaginations, was greatly displeased to see him, fearing he should lose that mighty Empire by coming, closed within him and stabbed him till he dyed, and after commanded his followers to say they found him so there, which they did. And he remained King, and Nycaon was buried at the Mountains foot.

That which you need at this present Time, it is to end this Adventure, and to take the Ring from the Emperor Brandezar, which you must use in a dear imploy, and without it you shall live the baleſt life that can be thought on. And because you shall have the greater desire to attempt it; I tell you the said Friston did ordain all those things you saw to disturb your battel, and is now gone into the City of Babylon; for he knoweth by his Art, that if at this present, he get not in his power the Princess Florisbella, to give her to his friend the Prince Perianeo of Persia, he after shall not easily obtain her (at least by force) and therefore intends he by one means or other to have her for the Prince Perianeo very shortly: Wherefore it behoves her to have that King, that his determination may be frustrated, And if from the same Emperour you can take the Armour he wears, it would greatly avail you; for he that wears it, cannot be molested by any Enchantment whatsoever, nor be known, unless he will himself.

You

You have told me wonders (said Don Bellianis:) and is this Mans skill so great, that he can force the Princess Florisbella against her Will, & give her to the Prince of Persia? Doubt it not (replied Bellona) for more than this can he perform: and believe me, you shall sustain for this cause great travel, and therefore let us not defer the passing Time.

Here I commit you to God, leaving you to the valour of your heart, to finish what you have to do, and take this way, which will bring you to the place, for I must go no further with you.

Don Bellianis taking his leave of her, descended down that way so fast, that he quickly saw before him a strong and well towred Castle, and looking about, could find no Porch or Portal to enter into it. But going to the other side of it, he espied a little mouth of an obscure Cave: and looking down into it, he thought it descended into the Infernal Pit. And also before it he saw a great Pillar of fine Crystal, so transparent, that it seemed to take his light from the Suns own light that then shined on it, where were certain Letters made with rich Rubies, to this effect:

The Inscription of the first Pillar.

The strange Lodgings of *Brandezar* in the remembrance of *Nycaons* great revenge, chief in magick Art, shall be concealed from all men; till the strongest Lion, conducted by the little Wolf, shall with extream necessity in search of my skill, hither arrive. Whose valour must excel the force of my monstrous Guardians, leaving all his fine tempered Armour at the entrance of my Cave, if he be adorned with Vertue and fortitude. And thou couragious Knight, that wilt this adventure try, must arm thy self with nought but the war-like Virtue of thy magnanimous heart.

Don Bellianis having read the Letters, made no other woe than if he had seen none, but animating his resolution, drew forth his Sword, and would have entred the Cave, but ere he was aware, it vanished from his sight. O God (said he) what strange things be these? Is it possible I must without Armour pass through so fearful a place? And thinking it Cowardise to

linger

linger so long, presently armed himself, resting in his Hose and Doublet, and having his Sword in his Hand, kist it, and laid it down, and commended his safety to the Almighty, as a man that had bëen going to buckle with death. And considering with himself, that in the accomplishment of that Adventure, consisted the utter loss, or lasting liberty of his Lady; fearless he cast himself into the Cave, wherein he scarce had set his fëet, but he thought he descended into the lowest Centre of the Earth, sometimes striking his head, sometimes his fëet against the sides thereof, that he was so bruised, he felt not himself; and when he came to the bottom, he lighted with so great a fall, that he thought he was beaten to pieces: and rising with no small pain thereof, looked to sëe where he was, but could discern no more than in the dark night, closed within an obscure Dungeon; and searching on all sides for light, at last he espied a little Hole from whence there issued so very little, that he could not almost sëe his Hands. But he was scarce at it, when he felt himself drawn backward with such force, that he had almost tumbled with his shoulders on the Earth; and turning to sëe who pluckt him back, he saw him to be a mighty Gyant, having in his hand a most sharp and puissant Battle-Axe, with him came two Centaurs, on either side each of them led a Lyon, the fiercest that ever he saw, they all came toward him with their puissant blows upon his Head, but he stepping back, escaped them all. Hereupon the Centaures unchained their Lyons, who presently ran upon him, and one thinking to rent his body with his sharp paws, leapt at him. But he stretching forth his strong Arms, catcht him by the neck, and choaked him. At this time received he two such cruel blows, that he was constrained to set his knëes on the ground, shedding much blood. And sëeing the Gyant hard by him, closed with him to wring his Axe out of his hands, whereon he cast his mighty strength, the Gyant perceiving his intent, did also lay fast hold on him; where the Centaurs incompassed him, both striving to draw him from the Gyant, where there was sëen the most unequallest wrestling that ever was heard of.

Don Bellianis still persisting in his purpose, was so oppress with their several enchanted forces, that he often lost his breath, and

and they making the Cave to tremble with the hoarse ecchs of their resounding clamors; but the Prince setting the utmost of his strength, wrencht the Faulchion out of his hand, and going to strike the Centaurs, he saw them all at that instant vanisht from his sight, which more amazed him than any thing else; and seeing a little pair of stairs before him, mounted up with as great courage, having that Faulchion, as if with all his armor he had been armed.

And having ascended the stairs, he saw a fair Hall, to which he should pass by so straight a way, that unarmed he could hardly go through it, where there was many armed Knights that kept the passage with their naked swords. These were of those Knights that were Enchanted with Brandezar, being of the strongest then living, whom Nycaon left for the Emperors Guard, with no other intent than to lose their lives, ere he should be taken away, or kill him that there should enter. Which Don Bellianis seeing, and that he must of necessity pass through; with an invincible Heart with a Faulchion in his Hand cast himself amongst them, where he no sooner came but two of them setting their shoulders against him, most bravely made him go three or four steps back, wounded him grievously on the Leg, and on his Head; and being unarmed had almost killed him.

Don Bellianis seeing the strength of the Knights to be so great, determined to behave himself otherwise with them, and returning again to the door, struck at them divers times, thinking they would give back, but they had no other care but to offend and defend, not stirring any way. Hereat the Prince warding their blows with his Faulchion, drew one of them unto him by his shield, with such haughty strength, as made him headlong tumble at his feet, and took his shield from him, and with it about his arm, rusht among all those Knights in such a cruel fight, leaping on all sides to shun their blows. In this manner lasted their fight above three hours, that in the end the Prince so behaved himself, that he overcame them all, which were above thirty, leaving them all breathless in the Hall. He entred into another lodging next to that, being wounded in twenty places, and thinking it no wisdom to go through such a place disarmed, turned back, and buckled about him one of the

dead

dead knights Armour, and so went forward till he came to another stair, and ascending it, He saw on the top thereof, an ugly and Infernal Monster, which with such force came upon him, that he tumbled down those steps he had gone up, with so great a fall, that in all that day he had not felt such pain, resting so feeble, that he had scarce strength to stand up. But burning in the flames of ire for that which befell him, mounted up again with more advised resolution, lest the like might happen to him again. And being at the stair Head, he saw the fearfull Monster accompanied with a Horrible Dragon, which would have thrown him down, but he leaning his Back against a wall and set the pummel of his sword to his breast, and the point towards the Dragon, expecting his encounter, which was so mighty, that his own force gave him his death: for running upon the sharp sword, it pierced him quite thorow. But the fierce encounters he received of both those Beasts, so bereft him of strength and senses, that he was fain to sit down upon the stairs. Where returning unto his remembrance, he found himself in a fair large grænyard, in midst whereof was erected a gallant Pillar, like that he saw at the Caves mouth, whereon there were written these words in Caldean Letters

The Inscription of the second Pillar.

What haughty Knight soever, whose high valour hath hither brought by the supreme courage of his heart, let him enter by that door, where he shall find the end of his demand, if he excel in strength the mighty Emperor *Brandezar*, whose puissant forces never any in ancient ages equalled.

Don Bellianis that longed with desire to terminate with a happy end that Adventure, went to the Portal that the Letters shewed him.

CHAP. XLI.

The cruel battel fought between *Don Bellianis*, and the Emperor *Brandezar*, with whose death the Adventure was ended.

THrough the which he was scarce entered but he heard the pitifullest laments that ever were heard, proceeding from a Knight

Knight that suffered some great torments, and hearkning from whence the voice might come, he pass'd forwards, entring into a Chamber, where he saw a Knight Armed in fiery armour, that seemed to burn him. Round about him were many Snakes and Adders, with many other venomous worms that bit all his body over, and these holding him fast, there came two mighty Basilisks, which would cast upon him all the poyson and blood in their body. Yet saw not Don Bellianis, who with fiery buttons seared his flesh, which penetrated the very bone: the intollerable pain whereof made him breathe forth those lamentable cries, and began to complain in this manner.

Oh unhappy Brandezar, the most unfortunatest that ever breathed on the earth. May it be the lavish-giver of unconstant Happiness, the blind guiders of the round volving wheeled chance (for thy great unhappiness and perpetuity of languishing pains and plaguing grief) should subjugate under thy command, the vast Empire of Babylon, Persia, and Trebisond, knitting thy joynts with mightier forces than any in the universal World? to give thee now so high a fall, overwhelming thee in this present everlasting misery, and put thee in such continual torments by the hands of thy greatest enemy, and that death hath not the power to vanquish thee. Oh! is it possible that he that for a God was on earth adored, should now endure such hellish pains? O cruel death, why comest thou not to crave possession of thy due tribute? Oh life, why dost thou haunt me, being haunted with such contrarious stars of maligning, and unhappy Fortune? And with these words, renewing his old laments, so mollified the Princes tender heart, that he fell in a deep consideration of the mutability of Fortune, with remembrance of the high majesty of that Emperor, being the puissantest both in possessions and Countries, as of proper strength, that in his age lived none to equal him: whose life and Chivalries he had read being a child. But recording that was he whom he must conquer, stepped forward, whereat the two Basilisks that lay by Brandezar, leapt about him, and so fast held him, that he could not stir: the like did all the other Serpents, which so cruelly bit him, that they made his bones shrink within his Armour. Don Bellianis began to strike on all sides, but it was

in vain, for all his strokes wounded but the Air, which he perceiving, procured with mer strength to pass away. Here was his labour doubled to no great purpose, yet with often falling and rising he was so toyled, that at length he arrived to the Chair where the Emperor sate, which somewhat eased him, for all those cruel Beasts left him. But Brandezar that by him saw that Knight, thinking it was his cruel foe the King Nycaon, he took him so bravely betwixt his arms, that he easily drew him to him. Don Bellianis letting fall his Faulchion, got hold on the Emperor, though he more willingly would have got from him, because of the extream heat that proceeded from his Armour, and so continued in their wrastling till they overthrew the Emperors Chair, and so parting from one another, Brandezar drew forth his sword, and the Prince took his Faulchion, and began so dangerous a fight as never was seen in so short a time, abundantly shedding their blood. Don Bellianis at this time was in extream peril, for that the Emperors strength was incomparable, and himself sore wounded, which he perceiving, awaited a blow of the Emperor, which threw the remnant of his shield to the ground, and wounded him on the arm, but he gave him a terrible blow on the Leg, that Brandezar could no longer stand thereon. But losing none of his courage, defended himself upon his knees, that made Don Bellianis discharge his blows so fast, thinking to end the contention with one blow on his head, the Emperor warded it with his sword, and so bravely thrust at him, that had it taken him full, it might have ended his life, yet the furious sword ran through his right side renting his flesh, with the greatest wound he had received all that day.

Don Bellianis foaming at the mouth for anger of the terrible wound, struck at the Emperor with both hands, and cut his thigh in sunder, whereat he fell down, and within a while died. At whose death there began so horrible a noise in all the Castle, with so monstrous an Earth-quake, that Don Bellianis fell in a Trance, but recovering his senses, felt himself well and lusty without any wound, seeing neither sign nor memory of Castle or Cave, but before him lay dead the Emperor Brandezar, and his Knights, which greatly grieved him, there also he found

his

his Armour he had left, and putting off those he had on, armed himself with the Emperors, which were the richest till that hour seen. They were all green, garnished with many Basilisks of gold and Azure, with many unvaluable Pearls of exceeding brightness, and girding his good sword, went to the Emperor for the Ring the wise Woman had told him of, which he took from a right finger of his right hand; the preciousness of this Gem much amazed him, the stone of it was a little Carbuncle, yielding as much light as four burning Torches. But scarce had he taken the Ring, but hard by he saw a Tomb as fair as ever he saw any, set upon twelve Pillars of Crystal, which sustained an Altar made of the richest Emralds in all the Oriental Regions. Upon every Pillar stood four Angels, holding four burning Torches that never wasted. Upon the Sepulchre was a shield held up by two great Griffons, with the arms of the Emperor Brandezar, and about them were written these words.

The Inscription of the Shield upon the Emperors Sepulchre.

Nycaon King of *Ægypt*, chief Magician of his time, in perpetual memory of his revenge, for the destruction made of his Kingdom, by *Brandezar* Emperor of *Babylon*, *Persia*, and *Trebizond*, hath erected this Monument, wherein after the many torments sustained by his skill, being vanquished he lieth dead by his hands, that in valour excelleth all Knights in the Universe. Here shall he lye buried in this lasting Monument, till the Son of the brave Lyon with his force shall overcome the power of my Art, obtaining the sight herein inclosed, not using the rare valour of his heart.

On the other side of the Tomb was set another shield, expressing the manner of the Emperors Enchantment, and for what cause Nycaon had so done, with the manner of his liberty by Don Bellianis, who attentively beholding that wondrous work with great joy for the obtained Ring, he espyed Bellona in great haste come to him, in manner as he left her, and demanded how he did: Very well (replyed he) for I have accomplisht what you commanded me, yet am much amazed at what here is; for having seen none to do it: Here lieth buried the Emperor

Brandezar, and do greatly desire to see what is within. That may not be (answered she) for our staying may prejudice us, but I long to try it (said he) but I will leave it, seeing you will have it so. And one of the Gyants that came with her gave him a shield according to his Armour, but in the middle of it was his accustomed device. Don Bellianis greatly rejoyced to see the Picture of his Lady. And so departed in the manner they came, in short time posting many miles. But here we leave them, returning to the great Magician History.

CHAP. XLII.

What *Friston* wrought after the two Princes Battel, to get into his power the Princess *Florisbella*, and how she was succoured by *the Knight of the Golden Image*.

The Battel being ended between the two Princes, as before is mentioned; the Sage Friston having cured the Prince Perianeo of his wounds, returned to his Habitation in the desart of death: where calling to his remembrance the love that Perianeo did bear the Princess Florisbella, but she little regarded, and wherein he continually languished. He cast about with his Conjurations by which he came to know, that if under the domination of the Planet Mercury that then raigned, he got not into his hands the beauteous Princess Florisbella, he should after suffer mortal torments for her sake: yet could not learn whether the Persian Prince should marry her or no. And in these tumultuous times, thinking easily to get and present her to the Persian Prince before the end of these wars, taking the necessaries to imploy his Art, arrived in little time within the superbious of Babylonian Walls: where he raised a Tent, the richest and statelicst that ever was seen, with so many Gallant Devices, that it admired every beholder. But no sooner was it seen, but it was told the Soldan, who with the Empress Silviana his wife, and the Princess Florisbella his Daughter, came forth to see it, greatly wondring at the richness thereof. From whence they heard so sweet and Melodious a Consort of Musick, that it ravished their delicate senses: and after, so many Trumpets sounded, as if some pitcht

field,

field were to be fought, which being done there issued out of the Tent four beauteous Ladies, cloathed in long rich robes of Embroydered work, they were led by the hands by four valiant Knights clad in grẽn Armour, with many golden Stars thereon, with their helms laced on their heads. Which Troops went towards the gallant Princess Florisbella, that was discoursing with her Father about those Tents, and being before her, they all knẽled, refusing to rise, both at her and the Emperors entreaties. And one of the Ladies with a clear voice, that all might hear her, thus began.

High and mighty Potentate, Emperor of *Babylon*, Soveraign Monarch of the Oriental Regions, and most renowned *Soldan*, to whose Supream command the universal Globe of the orbed Earth might deservedly owe tributary duty, excelling all mortal Kings in honour and bounty, by maintaining equal and upright Justice thorow his vast Empire, with continual glory of Haughty Chivalry, daily honoured in his Courts, whose magnificent estate the immortal Gods do emulate through the incomparable beauty of his excellent Daughter, for whose sake his Empire shall still augment with eternal happiness, to perpetual ages. Know that the dear hopes to find redress for our troubled thoughts, hath brought us to this imperial City, and if our hopes be frustrated of their desires, we will return despairing of future remedy for our griefs, wanting it here, where never any was denyed.

Wherefore of thẽe and this glorious Princess we must obtain a bon before we do explain the cause of our coming. Require what you will (said the Soldan) for my desire is so great to know this adventure, that not only one, but twenty I do grant you: and therefore make us partakers of your grievancies. Upon this they arose, and the Damsel returning to her former purpose, thus said.

In yonder Tent (most Dread Lord) is the Valiant King Gorgiana of Sotia, chief Lord of that Land, whom you well know, being your near Ally, that being in his peaceful Kingdom, ordering of certain Triumphs, wherein himself, with most of his best Knights should be in: thither came many strangers and Forreigners, brought by the fame of his beauteous daughter,

daughter, then thought the faireſt Lady living. And among many that are arrived, ſhe was demanded of her Father for Wife by the great Magician Herodiano, King of the Iſland of Pearls, one of the braveſt Gyants hitherto ſeen. But he being informed what he was, anſwered him, that his Daughter being too young, was not determined to marry, and therefore craved his pardon. Which anſwer highly vexing Herodiano, that they being the next day in the ordained Jouſts, there appeared on the other ſide of the field theſe four Knights that you here ſee, who ruſhing within the Tourny, in ſhort ſpace overthrew above a hundred Knights, with ſuch deep wounds, that moſt of them could no more riſe. And they like furious Dragons ran up and down the field, that none durſt abide their fury. Which the King ſeeing, encountred them with ten Knights, againſt whom only three went, and the other imbraced the King in ſuch cruel manner, that both fell down, and the reſt left his Knights deadly wounded.

Then on a ſudden, appeared the Tent you yonder ſee, in which the King was ſet, with his daughter, and theſe four Knights remained as their keepers, whom no humane power is able to overcome, becauſe they are Enchanted: and in the ſpace of four days they vanquiſhed above four thouſand Knights that came to liberate their King, which not a little grieved us: But in the end, ſending for the counſel of a wiſe man, a great friend unto our King, we received this anſwer.

That the impriſonment of the King and his fair Daughter could not be remedied but by a Lady, whoſe beauty ſhould excel the honourable Princeſs Meridianaes, and finding her, ſhe ſhould prove the adventure of the Tent, and the Princeſs would give her a ſword, which in her hand ſhe holdeth, with which thoſe Knights ſhould be vanquiſhed, and the Enchantment ended. And for this effect he would work, that the Tent ſhould be brought where he would wiſh to have it, wherein we four might very ſafely go, for only theſe ſame Knights ſhould be our chief defenders.

In this manner have we in ſhort time travelled moſt part of Paganiſm, but never could find any that did ſurpaſs the beauty of our Princeſs Meridiana. And by the way hearing the fame

same propagated through this Eastern world of the rare and excellent beauty of the Princess thy dear Daughter, we are come to intreat thee to suffer this adventure tryed in thy Court, which will no little eternize thy great glory, setting an end to our many toyls, which else we shall sustain. And this is the boon which you and your excellent Daughter the Princess Florisbella granted us.

The Soldan rested highly astonished at the Ladies tale, greatly pitying the misadventure hapned to the King Gorgiano his kinsman, desiring to undergo any peril for his liberty, and answering the Lady, said: It greatly grieveth me (gracious Lady) that this mischance hath befallen your King and his Daughter, and it would highly content me, that you may find remedy in my Court. But tell me, the Lady, that proving it, and not ending it, doth she incur any danger? None (replyed she) for she that doth not excel the Princess in beauty may not enter therein, and from the door may you see what is within.

I am contented (said the Soldan) that the adventure be tryed. But I will first see the combating of the Knights: for I believe in my Court there are such that think to save the Ladies that labour. Your will be done (replyed the Damsel) though it be better that your Knights do not so endanger themselves, for their toyl will be in vain. Yet for all this will I have it so, said the Soldan. And thereupon commanded all his Knights to try the adventure: and the Damsels with their Knights returned to the Tent: in the entring whereof it seemed to open in the midst, where straight was seen a throne with thirty steps, which seem'd to be made of pure Crystal, in the midst whereof sate the King Gorgiano in all his Armour, leaning his Head upon his chair, seeming very melancholick; at his right Hand sate the beauteous Princess Meridian, in like manner as her Father. On the top of the Throne appeared Cupid the blind God of Love, with his bow and arrows, whose making was so artificial, that every one thought him alive. At his feet lay a Knight sore wounded with an arrow in his breast, who seemed with one hand to crave mercy, but with the other he held a scrowl very fairly written with plain Chaldean Letters, expressing for what reason the King Gorgiano was imprisoned.

Here

Here arrived of the Soldan's Knights, above three thousand in number, and were the valiantest in all the whole Empire.

The first that would prove the adventure was a Cousin of his called Baltasano of Numidia, who as it seemed was chief over the rest, he was armed in rose colour Armour, and taking with him two Knights, would have entred the Tent, but the enchanted Knights defended it against them, and at their first encounters ended the strife; casting the Soldan's Knights on the ground. The Soldan greatly amazed at this sudden exploit, had more desire than before to have the exploit ended, and first commanded the dead and wounded Knights to be carried away, and then willed the Ladies to try their fortunes, which many did, but none could enter the Tent: which the Princess Florisbella seeing, took by the hand the beauteous Mattaroso her Cousin, and said to her, Fair Cousin, shall we prove this adventure, although for my part I know I shall do but little? Even as please you, replyed the fair Mattaroso, though I perceive you mock us all; but I will try it first, because I will not rest with imagination that you ended it by first proving it, which then will be said you did, being the fairest, and so well known. You are pleased to jest (said the Princess.) But for the trying of this adventure, I would be glad that you might even save me that danger and fear, and we shall after try the advantage in that other. Then belike (replyed the excellent Mattaroso) you will not grant me to be the fairest, though I end the adventure: but seeing it is so, I promise you to find out a Knight to defend it against the whole world. You promise much (said the Princess) but I know no Knight can be so hardy to attempt so haughty an enterprise, unless it be the Knight of the Golden Image, whom I know will obtain nothing against me. All this I know (answered the Infant) but I have a Knight in these parts that excels him, both in valiancy and fairness. How know you that (said the Princess) for I never heard any such thing? I tell you (replyed the Infant) To my Fathers Kingdom came one who brought a Letter from the Sophy, Father unto the Prince Perianeo, requiring his aid to be revenged of a subject of his, that with the help of a Knight, called the Knight of the golden Image, hath slain his son in law the Prince Don Gallaneo,

neo, and had stolen his daughter Persiana, and recounted such wonders of this Knight, and of his rare beauty, which hardly we believe, but that we were informed thereof by other means. And this Knight will I have to defend my beauty, which notwithstanding I fear he will not, for I have heard he beareth your Picture graven on his shield. I am struck into great amazement (answered the Princess) with your discourse, and cannot comprehend that Knight in the world that would be so mad to presume to beautifie his Armour with my Picture. And I assure you, if he here arriveth, he shall do much to save his head, in recompence of his presumption. Trouble not your self with any such thought (said the Infant) for you would much more grieve if you should see all this place full of vanquished Knights in my behalf. In this manner chatted these two Mirrors of rare beauty, till they approached the rich Tent, where their senses were ravished with the rare melodious Musick that thence sounded; and parting hands, the beauteous Mattarosa entred the Tent, where one of those Knights took her by the hand, and brought her to the steps, whereon the Infant courteously began to mount. All the beholders judged the Adventure ended: which not a little grieved the Princess, because she had not first tryed it. But she had not ascended the third step, when she felt her self stayed, and striving to go up, she suddenly found her self without the Tent to her great grief, because she had not ended the Adventure. The Princess hereat laughing, said, I know not (fair Cousin) why you sought a sword, seeing you must not use any combating with me. I know not what to answer (said the pleasant Infant) but that no trust is to be reposed in these Enchantments, being only made according to their Authors mind: yet try you it, that we may see your merits, for it may be your company would lessen my grief. The Princess going to try the Adventure, she saw entred the further side of the field a Knight in green Armour, very rich, with many golden Basilisks thereon, whose gallant disposition more contented her, than any she ever saw. In his shield was drawn her Picture, so natural that it seemed alive: by his side did ride an ancient Lady maskt, bringing in her hands a naked sword, so bright, that it lookt like a transparent

glaſs of fine Cryſtal ſet againſt the Sun, which ſhe ſæing ſtayed her ſelf. The Knight and the Lady went ſtraight to the Tent. But Friſton ſæing them at firſt enter into the field, began to make his Conjurations, not knowing who they were, nor to what end they came, nor never could know it, becauſe Don Bellianis had on the Emperor Brandezar's Armour: and the ſage Bellona, which was ſhe that was with him, carried the ſame Emperors ſword: yet he ſtraight knew the effect of their coming, and believing to have no let in his intent, transformed himſelf into a moſt monſtrous ugly Griffon, and went ſtraight to the Princeſs, and taking her by the Arms, would have gone away with her, but the Knight of the Baſiliſks arrived ſo ſuddenly, that he had no time to do it, and with his ſword ſtriking at him, cut all his feathers, and wounded him on the ſhoulder, and the good ſword not only wrought this, but alſo made the ſage Friſton for to return to his natural form, falling preſently on the ground, bleeding apace; whom the enchanted Knights ſtraight took and conveyed within the Tent. Don Bellianis ſtepping to the Princeſs, ſaid, Faint not, Uſurpreſs of anothers heart, but animate your ſelf, till you be freed from him that ſo great harm would have done you. The Princeſs did ſee with much amazement by the fear, that ſhe knew not in what world ſhe was, the like hapned to the Infant Mattaroſa. But Don Bellianis being advertiſed of Bellona what he ſhould do, ſtept to the Tent, where he was aſſaulted by the four enchanted Knights, with ſuch hardineſs, that they put him in great extremity, for though by virtue of his ſword their enchantment prevailed not againſt him, yet were they very valiant and couragious. But the Prince ſæing himſelf before his Lady, and conſidering that to be the firſt battel in her ſervice, ſo handled his adverſaries, cutting Armour, fleſh and all, himſelf ſuſtaining great labour, and the loſs of blood. The Princeſs trembled for very fear, thinking ſhe ſhould be put in danger again. The Infant Mattaroſa that was more hardy, ſaid; What think you (fair Couſin) of yonder Knight? Surely, I think it is he that I told you of, for by the device of his ſhield, and the report of him, I do not doubt it. We ſhall now know it (replyed the Princeſs:) But let us intreat our Gods to free him from

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the danger he is in for our sakes. And therewith looked to the fight, wherein the Knight had brought his adversaries to such a pass, that they had almost slain, whereupon there issued out of the Tent two mighty Gyants, that assaulted the Prince, giving him such blows that it made his head kiss the Saddle-pummel: but he with double force (increased with rage) so behaved himself with them, that he threw two of the Knights dead to the ground. And seeing the battel so long endured, resolved to enter within the Tent in despight of them, knowing that if he did, the fight would cease, and the enchantment end. The Knights and the Gyants perceiving it, laid fast hold on him, but he being of mighty and unmatched force, maugre their power, went in with them, and with his sword he gave so hard a blow upon the steps, that he made a dark smoak like a thick mist ascend upwards, which so blinded the beholders eyes, that they saw not one another. But by means of the said Bellona it vanished, there remaining no memory of Tent nor adventure, save the two Knights that lay dead on the earth. Who were able to set down the amazed admiration that every one conceived seeing these strange things: and they were in such case as if that had been the fearful day of doom: specially the Soldan seeing all that had hapned, who went to speak unto the Knight that was already mounted upon his horse.

CHAP. LXIII.

What the Knight of the Basilisks pass'd, with the Soldan of *Babylon*, after the battel, and with the Princess *Florisbella*, departing unknown, promising speedily to return to serve her.

The Prince Don Bellianis seeing the adventure ended, according to his desire mounted on horse-back to depart, for so Bellona would have him do, but perceiving the Soldan coming toward him, he thought it discourtesie to part without speaking, staid, and seeing he was come nigh him, setting his hand on his Saddle, alighted with admirable lightness, and pro-

prostrating himself, demanded his hand to kiss. The Soldan against all intreaties did dismount, shewing the like courtesie that the Knight did, for he was a Prince absolute in all Courtly behaviour, to whom the Soldan thus said: I cannot comprehend the cause, excellent Knight, that having brought to end the greatest and no less strange Adventure hitherto seen, liberating us from such danger, you should depart, bereaving us of your defined conversation, by so sudden departure from our Court, which I would unwillingly have you do, though you were newly put in as great danger as the last you undertook in our behalfs, notwithstanding the Gods defend you: And farther I say, if at my request you deny to do it, withstanding my authority, you shall be convicted by her, for whose remedy our Immortal Gods, I think, brought you hither: where he imbraced him with love, as the benefit received bound him to. Don Bellianis was struck into such amaze, that he knew not how to be resolved, thinking if he did not obey the Soldan, the unkindness would be greater than the service he had done him: And on the other side, he considered that he might incur no less danger in discovering himself, not knowing Bellona's intent, in so concealing him: but to salve all the best he might, made this reply, It doth not a little grieve me, most mighty Lord, that I cannot do you the service my heart desires, because it is not in my power, being brought by yonder Lady that you see, without whose leave I may dispose nothing: but binding my duty to your service forever, as the Person that most honour on the Earth deserveth. While they were thus talking the sage Bellona came to them, and with her the two sole excellencies of beauty, the Princess Florisbella and Mattarosa, with such rare brightness, that it would obscure the mid-day Sun in all his pride. The above all fairest, the Princess Florisbella, sole divine perfection of an Earthly object, came with such gallant semblance, that no humane heart could have been so obdurate, but would have melted at her sight: she was clad in a white Satten Gown, with a Petticoat of the same, all cut upon most rich cloth of gold, and every cut tacked with a great Orient Pearl, which were so many, and so well set, that they made so strange a work, that the curiousness thereof could not be discerned, the Sleeves were long

long and large, hanging to the ground, closed with wire of massive gold, set with the same Pearls, and lined with the same cloth of gold, hung out with many unvaluable Jewels; her Amber hair dishevelled on her shoulders, hung backward, gathered together behind her ears, upon which she had a Coronet garnished with Diamonds, Rubies, Saphires, and Pearls, of more worth than that whole City, before on her Carkanet pended a Carbunkle as big as two Walnuts, that yielded so much light as four torches burning in the dark. Her Gorget was so open, that plainly might be discerned the rare excellency of the Creator of all things, in the pure wonder of the Sun out-clearing whiteness of her Breast, adorned with inestimable Gems. And although she came thus attired, more beauty did glorifie her garments from the divine nature of her face, than was her beauty graced by the brightness of those stones, such sole supremacy did make her absolute; for no artificial work could diminish or augment her favour. The stately passage of her feet no more seemed to move them, than the gentle blast of the mild blowing wind. The Princess Mattarosa was attired in that manner, whose perfection had no equal in the absence of her fair Cousin. In this manner arrived they where the Soldan was talking with the Prince Don Bellianis, who seeing the excellency of his Lady, that far excelled the portraiture of his shield, rested so confounded with admiration, that his heart unable to resist so fierce an assault, all covered with a cold sweat, as if that were the last moment of his life, lost his sense, that had not the Soldan (who thought some mortal wound had caused it) held him fast about the neck, he had fallen to the ground, yet notwithstanding he was in such a trance, that he felt nothing that was done to him. Whereat the Princess Florisbella being very sorrowful, stept to him to unlace his helm. But the Sage Bellona quickly running thither, cryed out she should not do it, and imbracing the Prince said, that every one heard: What is the matter, Knight, that in time when we most need your help, you shew such weakness? the Prince at these words recovered himself, and greatly ashamed at the accident, replyed. You know, dear Lady, that I can do no otherwise, seeing the hand of cruel death knocketh at my heart, unless I be succoured with

with present remedy. Our Immortal Gods will not permit it Sir Knight (said Forisbella) that we having received so absolute remedy by the help of your valourous arm, your life should be bereft you, to depart ungratified for your dear merits. Whereto he answered:

In all humble duty, lower than lowly earth, I kiss your beautious hands (excellent Princess) for the undeserved favour of your words, whose power hath only power to cure my decaying life, despairing of all remedy and dear comfort in the whole universe, but by this.

While they were thus talking, the Soldan knew Bellona, whom with great joy he imbraced, she would have kissed his and the Empress hands, but the Soldan would not suffer it. Why have you, dear friend, kept your self away so long time, not visiting us? for I know no cause you had for it, but now shall you pay for all, not departing so easily as you think. And I pray you tell us who this valourous Knight is that comes with you? for I am sure you knew of our distress, seeing you came in so great time of need. The wise woman made this reply. You say true (Dread Lord) for knowing your danger, and that surely you had lost the Princess your daughter, I undertook this journey, imposing so great danger upon this Knight, as he underwent by our coming: And believe me, his equal lives not this day in the World, and without him my coming had been in vain: and hitherto I did not visit you because you had no need of me. I believe it, replyed the Soldan, and now that our joy may be compleat, pray make this Knight unlace his Helm, and remain here some few days, for it would greatly vex me if such a Knight should go from our Court unknown. This must be pardoned (said she) for he must depart unknown, and therefore do not importune him about it, for it cannot be otherwise. Hereupon they went where the two Princesses Florisbella and Mattrosa were chatting with Don Bellianis, intreating him to put off his Helm. Whereupon the Soldan said, If you obtain no more than hitherto you have done of this Knight, I believe he will depart unknown. He will not so much wrong us (said the Princess) unless he will have us make little account of his aid we received. And seeing he saith he will do what

what this Lady doth command him, I hope she will not leave us so unsatisfied in recompence of her long absence. I do beseech your excellency (said Bellona) not to ver your self: for I assure you if he now discover himself, it will cost him no less than his life, in lieu of the pleasure he should do you therein. And let this suffice, which according to our power we have done. But yet in respect of this displeasure, I do certifie you that your cousin the Princess Aurora is well (though sorrowful wanting your company) she we left in Persia, with the Ladies you sent to seek her, and thither must we go shortly. This hath greatly comforted me (said she) yet rest not altogether satisfied, wanting the effect of this my desire. I cannot express the oppression of my grieved heart (most excellent and supream Lady) said Don Bellianis, to have so yoked the liberty of my condition to a strangers power, that I cannot now, though it were with the certain danger of my life, satisfie the dear obedience of your high command: for I have so tyed my self to anothers will, that I must not do more than what this Lady here shall appoint me.

But I do protest and promise you by our high Immortal Gods (having freed my liberty) to return with all speed to serve you, and the Soldan your Father, whence I will not part, but by your command; In token whereof, I do beseech you accept this Ring, which cost me no little labour, with abundant loss of my blood to obtain it. Wherewith you shall be safe and sure of any such accident as this last. And taking off his Gantlets discovered the Alebaster whiteness of his hands. The Princes heart was somewhat abashed, adding more beauty to her beauty, by the roseat tincture of a vermillion blush, not knowing whether she should take the Ring which the Knight presented her, thinking she should thereby do him a greater favour than she would: which the Infant Mattarosa perceiving, being greatly satisfied with the Knights behaviour, said unto her. What doth your Highness doubt? why do you not accept the precious gift of this valourous Knight? would you see us every day in like danger? which if you desire, I assure you we shall not every day have so good help: for though I sustained some peril yet was there none that succoured me. Receive this gift, Daughter, said the Soldan, for it is no small thing to

keep

kæp the pledge of ſo valiant a Knight. All this while the diſcreet Princeſs, holding down her eyes, gazing on Don Bellianis hand, thinking with her ſelf, that if his face, with the diſpoſition of his body did agree with it, the whole world could not afford a gallanter or better Knight, of whoſe valour ſhe was a ſufficient witneſs. And ſeeing her Image in his ſhield, imagined this was the Knight whoſe praiſes her Couſin had ſo inhoſted. Whereupon the ſubtil God of Love on a ſudden took his tributary duties by the poſſeſſion of her heart, and with ſuch a violent ſtroke penetrated it, that having no defenſive proof, nor the ſhield of reaſon to withſtand it, but unprovided, aſſaulted by his ſubtilty, yielded at the firſt encounter, reſting ſo vanquiſhed, that ſhe never had the power to recover the former liberty of her heart. And the more ſhe thought on him, the more ſhe enſnared her ſelf, as the diſcourſe of the preſent Book mentioneth; for no ſmall torments this ſtrange ſight of Don Bellianis cauſed in her, and with a ſudden joy conceived by her thoughts, dying her beauty to make it more fair, with the colour of an orient Ruby. Firſt thinking that her Fathers command, and her Couſins perſwaſions, were ſufficient Armour to ſhield her from after ſequent ſcandal, with lowly courteſie on both parts ſhe took the Ring, ſaying, I do receive (Sir Knight) this preſent at your hands, leſt it be ſaid, I do deny the gratefulneſs I owe for the good turn you did, and taking poſſeſſion of this which is the leaſt, you ſhall remain bound to that which is the moſt, I mean your ſpædy return to attend the Soldan my dread Soveraign: and becauſe you ſhall not forget it, I will kæp this as a pledge left me by you, as alſo in remembrance of her that againſt my will leadeth you away, before you have received any ſign of guardon of my father; yet before you go, I pray you let us know the dangerous deceit we had like to fall in. I do moſt humbly beſeech you (ſole preſident of divine excellency, ſaid Don Bellianis) to let me kiſs the wonder of your hands, that I may thereby enjoy the fruition of ſo high a favour as you have done, in the acceptance of ſo ſmall a gift of ſo mean a Knight as I am, in reſpect of your Highneſs, again promiſing my return ſhall be ſo ſhortly, as the obedience of your command requireth, unleſs my hopes be fruſtrated by death: and turning to Bellona, entreated

treated her, seeing she knew the beginning and end of that Adventure, she would fully satisfie the Princess therein. Which she did, in manner already set down. And having done, craved leave to depart, and so kissing the Soldan's hand, and the Empress Silviana's, bad them and the Princesses farewel.

Don Bellianis did the like, with such grief (as any in his case may imagine) leaving his heart with the Princess, and for it carrying away hers. The Princess Mattarosa pleasantly said thus unto the Prince, I do believe Sir Knight, that the Sage Bellona hath so master'd you, that you speak not but when it pleaseth her: and if it be so, tell it me; for I presume to obtain leave of her, for your tongue to play. Don Bellianis that through his great amazement had not seen her, but seeing her, replied, This hath not been the cause of my silent oversight, (courteous and pleasant Lady) but the imaginations of the sight there seen, which with my sudden departure hath so increased my admiration, and so intrapt me in mine own thoughts, that they have suffer'd me not to regard the deserved merits of your worthy person, robbing the power of my speech, to confound me more in the deep consideration of my hearts subjection. Then belike the fault is very little (answered she) by the speedy redressing of our danger, wearing so good an armour as that. The present blindness (dear Lady, said he) is better to preserve my sight. At your return, you shall explain me this, (said she) for now I do not understand it. Whereupon the brave Prince Don Bellianis mounted on horse-back, not setting his foot in the stirrop, as was his custom, and very gallantly managing him, he made him bend his knees unto the earth; and bending down his own head in sign of his duty, departed in manner as he came, with unspeakable joy, to have so happily finished that Adventure before his Lady, to his immortal glory, which were it not temper'd with grief of his departure, it had been enough to kill him. But here we leave him, till further accidents shall refresh his remembrance.

CHAP. XLIV.

What the Princeſs *Florisbella* did, after the Knight of the golden Image was departed. Of her laments and conference with the Infant *Mattaroſa* her Couſin.

The Princeſs Florisbella remained ſo amazed with the ſudden departure of the new Lover, that ſo quickly had made a prey of her tender heart, that all her imaginations were on nought but Don Bellianis, and till he went clean out of the field, ſhe accompanied him with her ſight, ſo ſtedfaſtly fixing her eyes after him, that had not her Couſin called her away, to follow the Soldan and Empreſs that were returning to the Court, there ſhe had ſtaid, forgetful of her ſelf. The Infant Mattaroſa ſaid unto her by the way, what ſay you (fair Couſin) to the great Knight? did you ever ſee in all your life a man of more valour? And truſt me, I think it is he I told you of a little before his coming: I greatly deſire to ſee the fairneſs of his complexion, whether it accorded with the conſtitution of his body, and gallant behaviour. I know not what I ſhould ſay (replied the Princeſs) for he hath ſeemed ſo well in my eyes, and though his valour hath freed me from the danger that you ſaw, great is his preſumption notwithſtanding, to bear my Picture about the world with him, and his diſcourteſie is no leſs, to depart unknown to the Soldan my Father, and nothing reſpecting our intreaties, leaving me ſo diſcontented, and I had not taken his Ring, had not my Father commanded, and you perſwaded to it. You have no reaſon to blame him for it (ſaid her Couſin) for he could do no otherwiſe, being bound unto the contrary by that Sage Bellona, and I know not what Princeſs or greater Lady would have refuſed ſo dear a ſervice as this Knight offer'd you ſo liberally, which you ſeemed to accept moſt unwillingly. Speak not of it (anſwered the Princeſs) for I had like to have ſhewed my ſelf as unthankful in taking it, as he diſcourteous in not doing what I entreated him. But if he return he ſhall know the diſcontent he did me. Aſſure you, (ſaid her pleaſant Couſin) if he would be my Knight, I would not hammer on theſe doubts.

If he returns he ſhall be (anſwered the Princeſs) I will yield unto it (ſaid the Infant) if you obtain it without ſuch ceremony as you make. It may be I ſhall at his return (the Princeſs made an-

answer) and therefore rest contented. I perceived no such intent in him (replied the Infant.) In such like discourse went they with the Soldan and Empress till they arrived at the Palace, where the Princess, saying she felt her self distemper'd, left her Cousin and her Ladies, withdrawing alone unto her chamber, to consider at more leisure of him that so displeased her: and shutting the door after her, with a pensive heart unable to resist her passions, she cast her self upon her bed, and with tears trickling down her chéeks, with sighs that interrupted the clear passage of her speech, she said with a soft voice, O unhappy Princess Florisbella, what unlucky hour was that wherein thou didst go to sée that cursed Adventure, that hath been the cause of these thy torments and anguish of heart, making thée hereafter bondslave to grief, and in the end gain thy frédom by death? Ah deceitful Ladies, fatal was the moment, wherein I granted you the boon you craved, to gain for my good will so many pains. O sage Bellona, if from one danger you have liberated me, in a greater you have intrapped me. And I do beséech the Gods to terminate these woes with my untimely death. For what avails it me, to be Commandress over so many Kings, Princes, Lords and Signiories, if the fatal destinies of my unhappy chance have tied the liberty of my heart unto a Knight unknown, of whom I saw but armour and his horse, neither know I what he is, denying to discover his face. O immortal Gods, if this ye have order'd in the heavenly Synod of your decrées, why did ye not also summon me to appear before your celestial thrones, to hear your cruel sentence given against me? But what say I, disgraced, that I am? For it may be, that Knight is one of our Gods. For who could else have had the power to do what he did in such a short time, and so enthral the quiet peace of my heart? O Prince, how have the Gods revenged thée, because I never regarded thy high merits, punishing my contempt by that Knight that would not shew me his face, whom peradventure you may be he, that would not disclose your self, being displeased by my Father? but ah me, thou art not he, for thy words never so penetrated my heart, nor the sage Bellona (thy great enemy, by reason of her Cousin the Princess Aurora) had not brought thée in her company. But ah me, distressed soul, be it

as it will, only I must languish in perpetual torments, and in the end hope for no remedy of any.

While the Princess thus complained, her Cousin Mattarosa, that by her sudden withdrawing, did suspect what it might be, that came through a secret door where she was, and staid to overhear her, but could understand nothing what she said, and greatly wondring at this novelty, she went away, and came to her chamber door and knocked, which awaked the Princess out of her lament, who drying her eyes, order'd her self the best she could, open'd the door and let her in; but her Cousin, seeing her in that case, dissembled what she thought, and said, How now Cousin? doth the fear of the last Adventure last so long that it so troubles you; or is it because you did no more good therein than I? or is it the discontent you conceived of the discourteous Knight? if the last, tell me it, and we will procure him to redress the wrong. The Princess covering her face, with a blush like the morning Sun rising in the East, answered, Do not put me in more danger than there was in the last, dear Cousin, for you make me think you know the Knight, and to imagine that by your means I am snared in the deceit of yonder inchantment. In this manner pass'd these Ladies many days, discoursing on nothing but the deeds of the Knight of the Basilisks, for so they called him, by reason of the armour he did wear, and the Princess Florisbella every day with longing desire expecting his return, still continued in her usual laments, wherein her Cousin one day taking her, would néeds know the cause of them, which she by great importunity declared, which was no small comfort to her after woes. But here we leave them till their time, with the Soldan, greatly doubting whether this was the Prince of Persia, which he confirm'd to be, because he would not discover himself: but his Lords perswaded him to the contrary, saying, This Knight better became his armour than he. But now the story turns unto the Prince Brianel, whom we left in his journey towards Antioch.

CHAP. XLV.

What *Don Brianel* did after he was gone from *Bollera*, and how he was informed of the state of *Antioch*.

WIth great desire to procure the good success of his Ladies command, departed Don Brianel to Antioch, thinking

thinking that to effect so weighty a matter as that, his foundation was weak. But continuing his voyage, meeting with no Adventure worthy the rehearsal, at length arrived at a City not above 12 miles from Antioch, called Miriana, where he resolved to stay, and learn the state of the Kingdom. And alighting at a house of good credit, was very well entertained by the owner of the house, that was one of the best Knights in that Countrey: so supper ended, discoursing alone with him of divers matters, he demanded who was King of that Countrey, being then troubled with civil mutinies: the Host with tears in his eyes, thus answered, You shall know (Sir Knight) that after the King Pompeiano, our Sovereign, was slain, by the men of the Persian Soldan, a kinsman of his, called Don Gallaneo, became our King, who governed us in peace, maintaining law and justice, with all uprightness: but since, we have understood he was slain at Persepolis, by some of the same Soldan's subjects, and in whose absence there govern'd us as Viceroy, a noble man named Dumartino, who with great wisdom and discretion, kept us in quiet concord, till a Brother of the King of Phrygia, by name the fearful Tramolcano, knowing that in revenge of the death of Don Gallaneo of Antioch, the King of Cyprus, with two more brethren of his, were slain in Persia, calling us traitors and rebels, with a great power came upon us, and seduced the Countrey; Guriano, which is a great Lord in his Countrey, took our Governour, saying he would have rebelled with the Land, and hath imprisoned him in a Castle, taking possession of the whole Kingdom, saying, Don Gallaneo hath no nigher Ally than he, and so executeth daily such tyrannies on the afflicted people, that we desire rather to die than live. This, Sir, is the truth of your demand. But tell me, said Don Brianel, left your King Pompeiano no issue to inherit his Kingdom after him? He did, replied his Host, one daughter called the Princess Aurora, whom we think to be dead, for we have never since heard of her. But if she be not dead, said Don Brianel, and coming hither, will you not receive her? We will all die in her behalf, replied he; but these traitors are so strongly fortified, that we should hardly effect any good, unless there were some to encourage the people of the Countrey, and for this none better than the Governour Dumartino, but that his im-

imprisonment forbids it for ever. Is his Guard so great (said Don Brianel) that you think he may not be liberated? The Guard (replied he) is not so great, but that the City is so nigh to the Castle, that upon giving of the watch-word 30000 men would arm themselves. And in the Castle there is a Mine that reached to the King Tramolcano's Palace. How know you this, said Don Brianel? because you seem a man on whom I may repose greater trust. I will tell you (answered the Host) I was Lieutenant of the Castle, under Damartino 3 years, and then knew I it, and that way I went often to speak with him, which makes me the more pity his imprisonment. Don Brianel liked well of his Hosts words, and perceiving he wished well to the affairs of the Princess Aurora, said, Can you tell me how I might go into that Mine to get within the Castle? I do, replied he; but what doth it concern you, that you'l undertake so dangerous an enterprize? I am his nigh Ally, replied Don Brianel, and would willingly hazard my self to gain his liberty. Although it seems impossible to scape with life in this enterprise, said the Host, because there is within a Cousin of the Gyants, with 10 Knights, I will notwithstanding do it, and help herein while I live; and will go with you to morrow to Antioch, being an honour to lose my life in company of such a Knight. Don Brianel thanked him, promising that if their enterprise had good success, his pains should be well quitted. The deeds bring with them their recompence, said the Host; and more than this I am bound to do for Damartino. The next morning saying that he must go about certain affairs to Antioch, clad himself all in armour. For though he was poor, yet was he one of the valiantest Knights of that Countrey, all his life trained up in chivalrous designs. Which Don Brianel seeing wondred at it, knowing he was a Knight, and so departed toward Antioch.

CHAP. XLVI.

What *Don Brianel*, *Palineo* of the venture did, arriving at *Antioch*, and the danger they were in.

WIth intention aforesaid, travelled these two Knights, till they came within sight of the City of Antioch, which was one of the best and well peopled Cities of the world, for there was within a 100000 great households. Don Brianel highly admir'd

mir'd the Turrets and Towers of the same, which were numberless, and the Sun reverberating on them made the City seem of a burning flame. What think you Sir, of this noble City, demanded the Host? Well, replied Don Brianel, for I have not seen a fairer one, and that better contented me. Not without reason did you say so, said the Host, for I assure you, there are but 3 fairer at this present, which are Babylon, Memphis, and Constantinople, which notwithstanding scant in fairness equal this. I pray you tell me your name, said Don Brianel, for I greatly desire to know it, seeing we shall be better acquainted hereafter. My name is (said he) Palineo of the Venture; and seeing this occasion requires it, I would gladly know yours, before we come to Antioch. I am called the adventurous Knight, replied Don Brianel, and do believe you never heard me named, having never travelled this way before. I have no doubt of it, replied Palineo, but you must now change that name here, for it is said, a Knight so called was present at the King of Cyprus death. Thus went they till they met a Knight sore wounded going in great haste. Don Brianel staying him, demanded the cause of his hasty journey in that manner. You shall know Sir, replied the Knight, that the Count Gariano to exercise his Knights, order'd yesterday a Tourny of 1000 on each side, so many of his against the like number of the fierce King Tramolcano's, which on either part was begun this day very bloody; but in the mean time entring therein, 2 of the Kings Cousins have made such a massacre of the Counts Knights, that none dare confront them, and my self being wounded, as you see, am thus going to be cured in a Castle not far from hence, and so pass'd away. What were best to do, Sir Palineo, demanded Don Brianel? that we go to the jousts, answered he, and there we shall see what we have to do. And thus resolved, arrived at the Tilt-yard, where but 500 of the Counts Knights were left, and so wounded, that they could no longer withstand the adversaries, by reason of the cruel strokes of the Kings Cousins: which Don Brianel perceiving, and his valiant heart abhorring to be so idle, said to Palineo, let us succour these almost vanquished. Be it so, replied he. Whereupon couching their Lances, entered the Lists, and at the first encounter, overthrew two of the Gyants Knights; and Don Brianel before his

Lance

Lance brake, unhorsed more than six, Palineo with a loud voice cryed out thus, Courage, courage, Knights of Antioch, and shew the valour of your minds, lest now ye be reputed vanquished, which never hitherto hapned: who emboldened with this speech, seeing the haughty deeds of Don Brianel, courageously renewed the bloody skirmish. The two Gyants seeing that novelty in the Citys Knights, and how the Prince Don Brianel like a bloody Dragon persecuted their men, did both together assail him; but he that in greater perils had been in, awaited them couragiously, well covered with his shield, and they arriving both at one time with their slicing Semiters, discharged two mighty blows at him: but Don Brianel spurred up his horse within them, that the blows lighted not full on him; yet his shield was cleft asunder, and he wounded one with a mighty thrust, that the sword appeared at his back, falling dead to the ground. And seeing another furious blow from the other Gyant descending on his head, being destitute of a shield, crost the Semiter with his sword, being of a better temper than the Gyants, it cut it in two, and straight he struck the Gyant on his arm, that it fell from his shoulder to the earth, who seeing himself maimed of his limbs, turned his horse, and roaring fled away. None can express the grief and rage of Tramolcano, to see one Cousin slain, and the other wounded to death; thereupon calling out his men, to take that Knight that had committed so great Treason: whereat many incompassed Don Brianel, wherefore Palineo went to help him, amazed at his haughty deeds. The Count Gariano's men bravely defended him, yet had he remained prisoner (for the tevilish Tramolcano descended with all his men) had not Palineo that foresaw the danger, pluckt him by the arm, and said to him, Follow me (Sir Knight) if you will save your life; for it will be reputed no less valour to save it thus, than by staying to destroy all this company. Don Brianel allowing his counsel, rein'd his horse backward, and went away in despight of them all that loked after him. So soon as the King was come down from his window, the Tourny was parted, and he commanded of those and other Knights above 4000 to follow the murderers (as he called them) of his Cousins, and dead or alive they should bring them to him: and taking with him the dead bodies of his slain

slain Cousins, returned to his Palace to arm himself, minding in person to follow the search: all which was but in vain, for Palineo knowing all those ways, nooks, & lanes that were thereabout, issued out of the city, in sight of all the Knights, spurring without lingring till they came into a little grove, & turning on the right hand entred into a garden, unseen of any, and passed by the further side thereof, unto a house were shepherds in stormy weather withdrew themselves, and there stayed. Don Brianel said, (seeing they were not seen of any) Let us light here if you please, that our horses may rest, and from hence we may well see if any follow us. Where loking from a lofty mountain, and espying none, dismounted from their horses, and put them in a stable that was there, giving them hay and provender they found there. And with great joy of their good success discoursed of their late Adventure, greatly pleased with the death of those two Gyants, who Palineo said, committed great outrages in that Land. I hope (said Don Brianel) we shall easily enter the Castle. Hardly shall we do it (replyed Palineo) yet we will try it, seeing we are come to that effect. In the mean time, it were good we had somewhat to supper. It were not amiss (replyed Don Brianel) if our provision were better. Leave that to me, said Palineo, so soon as it is night I desire to see what is done in the Palace, the better to order our affairs. And so expected the approach of night for their ensuing actions.

CHAP. XLVII.

What *Don Brianel* and *Palineo* did going out of the City of *Antioch*, how they entred the Mine, and their fight within the Castle, about the liberty of *Damartino*.

THe dark night being come so obscure as they wisht, Palineo unarm'd himself, and leaving Don Brianel behind, put on a cloke he found in the house, which the day before a shepherd had left there, & muffling his face went to the City, where taken for a shepherd he passed unknown, till he came to the Kings Palace, where he found many armed Kts. that turn'd from the search, among whom was the King himself, mad with anger, that he could not hear of the two Knights that slew his Cousins: among this troop had Palineo occasion to go in, & so went to the Mines mouth, the door was shut, & feeling whether it might be opened,

he found the lock very weak, for the door was only used to be shut, because that secret might not be discovered. And so returned to the City, and brought some victual for himself and his companion, wherewith he came to Don Brianel at almost 10 a clock, and with a good stomack they supt, having eaten nothing since they came from Miriana, and having done, Palineo said, Let us be gone, for if we stay longer the King and the Count may have supt, and so we be lockt out of the Palace. But what shall we do with our horses? said Don Brianel; for I would not lose mine, because this city cannot afford one so good. If (replyed Palineo) we dye in this enterprise we shall not need our horses; but if we escape, liberating according to our desire our friend Damartino, the matter will be less in losing them. Don Brianel replying never a word, armed himself, and carrying his helm in his hand put on the shepherds cloak, which Palineo had before worn, who said unto him, You pass me in disguising your self, incurring no less danger than I do; for if with the many lights I be known by mine Armour in the Palace, you are like to suffer with me. But what shall we do (said Don Brianel?) Here we can do no otherwise, replyed he, but in the City we may better shift. And being come thither, by the way they met two or three Pages, Palineo stepped to one and took him by the cloak, made shew of drawing his sword, the affrighted Page left it, and got away, crying out they would murder him: but Palineo calling Don Brianel, crost another way, because he would not be seen: Don Brianel could not stand for laughing, to see what device Palineo had to get a cloak. What say you to this? said Palineo, he that hath nothing must shift to get it with little labour. It was well done, said Don Brianel, and the quickness you performed it with, makes me think you have not a few times used it. You say true, said Palineo, for sometimes through necessity, I have helped my self with the like devices, which is nothing; for in need this cleak was as much mine as his that wore it, and perchance more two.

In this manner arrived they at last in the Palace (after the clock had struck 12) where the King was yet at supper, meeting with the Captain of the Kings guard, thinking they belonged to the Count, demanded whence at that time they came?

They

They replyed, we came from ſeeking thoſe Knights the King our ſoveraign commanded to be brought unto him, and not finding them, we returned to unarm our ſelves. So they paſt till they came to the Mine, ſeeing none by, open'd the lock and went in, chaining the dor faſt on the inſide, and feeling with their hands went along, and by the way Palineo ſaid, It behoves us to conſider how we ſhall behave our ſelves, though you excell in valour all thoſe that wear armour, yet it is not amiſs to avoid all danger, therefore let us go ſoftly, for it may be we ſhall free Damartino without blow of ſword or lance. I would we were within, ſaid Don Brianel, and for the reſt it would not be much we ſhould do through your good policy. At length they came to the dor on the farther ſide, that went into the Caſtle, paſſing it Palineo ſhut it faſt, that none might deſcry them that way, and giving one another a watch-word to know themſelves in any danger befalling them, groping with their hands, they came to the place where Palineo knew the priſon was, which they found ſure locked; Don Brianel grieved, thinking they ſhould not do as they would: but Palineo ſaid, Courage, Sir Knight, we will find means to open this dor: And if not (replyed Don Brianel) our ſwords ſhall break it open. Palineo anſwered, You ſay well, therefore let us ſoftly go to the Caſtle gate, that none hear us, and make it ſure, that neither by one or other (if we prevail) any may bear the news: and going thither Palineo took a handfull of earth and caſt in the locks through the key-holes, that it was impoſſible without breaking to open them. I have learn'd more of you (ſaid Don Brianel) in one day than ere my Tutors taught me in ten years. It might be (anſwered Palineo) they were never in ſuch dangers as I, and could not teach you that which by experience is learned. By this time they were heard by one of the ſervants of the Caſtle, who perceiving they were not of the Court of guard, ran to the Gyant, crying, the ſtangers were within, the amazed Gyant leapt out of bed and armed himſelf, while the man cryed, Arm, Arm, the Caſtle is ſurpriſed: whereupon above ten Knights that were within were feared out of their beds: which the two Knights ſeeing, Palineo ſaid, Follow me Knight, before theſe unite themſelves. Yet for all their haſt there appeared many

burning torches, by the light they saw the fearful Gyant coming, with a mighty mace in his hands. Another way came there 6 Knights all ready armed. Don Brianel required Palineo to assault the Knights, while he withstood the Giant, who if he had thought them to be but 2 alone, had not armed him, and raising his heavy Mace, would have discharg'd it on his adversary, but stepping aside made him lose his blow, and wanting his shield, hoisted aloft his sword with both hands, and grounded it with mighty force upon the Gyants head, whereon he wore a brasen Scull, which being cut made him a little wound. The Gyant not regarding the blow, would have pul'd him to him, but Don Brianel seeing death before his eyes if the Mace took him full, straight cast himself upon him, and with much ado wrung it out of the Gyants hands, but he took Don Brianel between his arms, thinking to stifle him, yet he with a valiant heart drew his dagger, and stuck it to the hilt twice or thrice in the Gyants breast, who feeling himself deadly wounded, let him go, drawing out a Curtlear that hung by his side, and with it strook Don Brianel, which he spying come right to his head, started aside, yet for all that it cut the Helm quite down on the one side, and descending lower, parted his Armour, wounding him lorely on the side, yet not dangerously. Don Brianel with one blow strook at his leg, which that Gyant for haste having not armed was clean cut off, making him fall to the ground like a Tower, roaring like a Lyon, in short time he yielded up his soul to him that through his evil deeds did long expect it. Which done, Don Brianel went to help Palineo that was in a fierce combat with the Kts. of the Castle, which were all there; among whom he shewed the brave courage of his mind, and had slain already 4, and with the rest (though with danger) he behaved himself very bravely, which greatly contented Don Brianel that looked on, thinking it no time to be idle, valiantly assaulted the Knights, felling 2 dead at 2 blows, and not long after, the rest not able to suffer his mortal blows, fled down towards the Castle gate, where the Porter trying to open it, to call for help, but all his labour was in vain, which the Knights seeing, returned again to their adversaries, where quickly they fell breathless at their feet, with all the rest of the forces, leaving none of the Gyants company alive in the Castle.

This

This dispatcht, these 2 brave warriours searched about the Castle to sée if any were hid, but finding none, Don Brianel said; We have done ill not saving one, to do what we would, and serve us at our néed. Grieve not hereat, replyed Palineo, for we have no such business, nor néed more service than I can do, being not so deeply wounded, that we should require any such help. You say well, answered Don Brianel, but unless I be deceived, you are sorely wounded, and my self am in like case, and before we lose more blood, let us set Damartino at liberty. Be it so replyed Palineo, and so took the keys of the prison from the porters side, and opened it, where they found him overladen with bolts and irons, pale, meagre, and weak for want of sustenance, tasting no food sometimes in two or three dayes, whom the knights séeing, could not stay tears in their eyes, knowing him to be one of the loyalest Knights living in those days. Damartino séeing those Knights enter in that manner, said, What would you have with me Knights, is your Lord now contented to end my life, which would be no little comfort to my many torments? Palineo no longer able to conceal himself, unlacing his Helm with great joy to sée him alive, said thus, You have no cause to fear us, most loyal Knight, being now at length set at liberty by the hands of this valiant Knight, to whom you are no less bound than for your life. And by yours, said Don Brianel, for without you, mine had little availed. Whereupon taking away his irons, with great gladness he embraced Palineo, saying, I do assure my self, most dear Friend, you would not fail me in my necessity, for in such times true friends are known more than in prosperity, and humbling himself to Don Brianel, craved to kiss his hands, séeing his person and that good deed required his duty. Don Brianel shewed him the like courtesie, and taking him up, saying, that for that little he had done, he deserved no such thanks, being bound to do more than that for him for her sake that sent him. Sir Knights, said Damartino, I have certain servants in prison some where about this castle, for I know they were brought in with me, them I pray you let us frée, so they went to séek them, and Damartino greatly wondred to sée so great slaughter by 2 Knights. And after they had found the servants, Don Brianel, and Palineo were laid in 2 beds

in-

in the Caſtle, and were cured by one of Damartino's ſervants that was skilful in that ſcience; and there they continued certain dayes till they were well, ordering that if any came from the King they ſhould be admitted to them. But Don Brianel the firſt day required one of the ſervants ſecretly to fetch their Horſes where they had left them, which ſo ſoon as it was dark was done, that not a little contented Don Brianel, for he much priſed his horſe, being never a better in the whole Kingdom, and through the hurly burly in the City none remembred them within the Caſtle. But after they were well, Don Brianel ſaid to Damartino and Palineo together; Hitherto you have not known the occaſion of my coming, nor what I am, having never ſeen me before, but to aſſure you of both, read this Letter from the honourable Princeſs Aurora, by which you ſhall know the beginning and the end of my Travel: Damartino taking it, read it to this effect.

THe diſinherited Queen of *Antioch*, *Aurora*, Princeſs of *Miriana*, to thee the loyalleſt of all creatures, her loving Knight *Damartino of the Valley*, Governour of the Kingdom, by our will, though by a ſtrange hand, Health. I know the unhappy chances, overthrows, and unfortunate miſadventures have not been unknown to thee, (as the man that hath ſuſtained the like) which have by the proviſion of the immortal Gods befallen the King *Pompeiano* thy Lord, and my dear father, as alſo the feared abſence of my perſon, ſo neceſſary to eſcape the fury of Prince *Perianeo* of *Perſia*, & *Don Gallaneo* of *Antioch*. And now repoſing my confidence on the high eſtate of thy defence, in the great loyalty I have known in thee, and by the love my father bare thee (whoſe death partly on ſome of them is revenged, as this Knight more at large will tell thee) I hope the like ſhall be ſeen in my preſence, through thy means and order, either by coming in perſon to theſe, or with an hoſt of men, ſufficient to regain our rights; for with ſuch cauſe I ſend thee this valourous Knight, excellent not only in Arms, but in any thing elſe required in a Noble man, With him ſhalt thou determine beſt and ſpeedieſt means for theſe affairs we move, but the Gods protect thee, and preſerve thee in that ſtate of loyalty which thou ever glorieſt in.

So

So ſoon as Damartino read this Letter, imbraced Don Brianel again, ſaying, I could not have or deſire better news than theſe (Sir Knight) to comfort my afflicted heart, joying to know of the welfare of my Soveraign. But how ſhall we do? for this Tyrant and Uſurping King Tramolcano, is ſo mighty and ſtrongly fortified in this Land, that we can hardly oppoſe his forces. I am of opinion, ſaid Palineo, ſeeing we are to begin ſo great an enterprize, we acquaint the Duke of Silvania, to whom Don Gallinco having granted all his livings, the Uſurper hath now for ſome cauſes diſcontented, and he I am aſſured ſeeing you at liberty, will not deny all his aid, aſſiſting you to reobtain that which he hath loſt, or elſe loſe what he hath now. I do very well like what you have ſaid, replyed Damartino, and therefore you and I will to morrow go to him, leaving this Knight in the Caſtle, to anſwer any that come from the City. It were better we all go together, ſaid Palineo, and if any come we will leave order with theſe ſervants what they ſhall do. Be it ſo, ſaid Don Brianel, and I think it beſt we go ere it be day, that we be not ſeen, putting on the Armour of the Gyants Kts. So reſolved they went to reſt themſelves, and about midnight roſe and changed their Armour; Damartino and Palineo taking the beſt horſes in the Caſtle, departed, commanding their ſervants, if any came from the City they ſhould tell them the Gyant had commanded none ſhould enter to ſpeak with him, becauſe he was not well, and that they ſhould make them anſwer according to their demand, in the Gyants behalf.

CHAP. XLVIII.

What befel *Don Brianel* and his companions, with the Knights of the Lyons, and how knowing one another, they all returned to the Caſtle.

TWo parts of the night were overpaſt, when the dazling light of pale ſhining Diana, would give place to the eaſtern riſing of the morning ſun, whoſe clear approach expelleth from the Heavens the obſcure darkneſs of the glomy night; when theſe 3 Knights iſſued forth of the Caſtle upon ſtately courſers with ſtrong and knotty lances in their hands, and with 2 pages only to bear their ſhields, directing their way to the city of Silvania, ſuppoſing to find the Duke there. Now, ſaith the hiſtory, they.

they were not gone 6 miles from the city, but they saw coming towards them 2 Knights, the bravest gallants they ever saw, they brought with them 6 pages, all on fair horses. Did ye ever see gallanter Knights in your life, said Don Brianel to Damartino? No truly, replyed he. Assure your self, said Palineo, they be not of this Country, for none here can sit a horse, nor manage him so bravely; yet by their Armour they seem novel Knights. Why think you so, said Don Brianel? Because they have on them no such signs as you (replyed he) whereby it seems they have not been in many combats, or not with that armour, and if you think good, it would not be amiss to try if their substance doth agree with their shew. Do not, said the prudent Damartino, put your self to such tryal, for oftentimes combats are jestingly begun, but in earnest ended, especially because methinks yon Knights will bravely defend themselves. With this talk they drew nigh to one another, whereby they saw them with rose-colour'd armour, very rich and curiously graven with many lions crowned with laurel-wreaths; one of them stept forward, and meeting the 3 Knights, in the Persian tongue saluted them, they did the like with much courtesie. Came ye (sir Knights, said he of the Lyons) from Antioch? Yes, replyed they, we yesterday came thence. But why ask you? because (said he) I go in search of a Knight whom I hope to find there; may be you know him, What device wears he in his arms? or what is his name, demanded they? I know not how he may call himself this way, replyed he of the Lions, but he wears a tauny armour, with a sea-wave, and on his shield engraven the picture of a very fair lady, I know if he be in these parts, he cannot but be named according to the courage and valour of his mind. Don Brianel hearing this, thought they demanded for Don Bellianis, and because he spake in the Persian language, imagined he was gone from Bollera where he left him, and this might be some friend that followed him; desirous to be better informed of this, said, This Knight you ask for, is not in this country, but if you will tell me what you would with him, I'le tell you where you may find him; for though this Knight is no less named than you say, none can give you better instruction of him than I. That I fain would speak with him, there is nothing I more desire; therefore

you

you may greatly favour me to tell me the place of his abode without further question. I'le tell you, said Don Brianel, and let me know your name. I am called the Knight of the Lyons. I am never the wiser for that name, said Don Brianel, therefore unless you be more plain you shall not know of me what you would. You are a strange man (said the Knight of the Lyons) to deny my request, having told you my name, for in that you know me not, I am not bound to tell you who my Grandsire was. It's a marvel you are unknown, said Palineo, having ended so many Adventures with the armour, which so testifie, seeming wondrous batter'd, and it may be a wonder you were not without further question known, since the Kingdom of Antioch is so full of your prowesses. Whereunto the Knight of the Lyons thus replied, By your words I perceive, because I should have said by you what you did by me, you have so mangled your armour, and not that with them you have been in any fight: if you have in you such deeds as words proudly to breathe unseemly jests, I gladly would break a Lance with you, upon condition that if I vanquish you, this Knight be bound to tell what I demanded; and if I be vanquished, my armour shall be yours, that you may imploy them in such enterprises you speak of: be it as you please answered Palineo, if my companion will agree to the condition. I am content, said Don Brianel. Whereupon Palineo turn'd about to take his career, so did the Knight of the Lyons, with great fury meeting in the midst of their course, and staying themselves in their saddles, the encounters were so strong, that the Knight of the Lyons lost his stirrops; but Palineo was by the fierce shock clean unhorst over the crupper, and his adversary pass'd away most gallantly toward Don Brianel, who much wondred at the brave encounter, saying thus to him, Seeing (Sir Knight) in you remains to discharge the condition of our controversie, I intreat you to satisfie my demand. Don Brianel being about to answer him, Palineo arrived, saying, Knight of the Lyons, let's end the battel, for though I fell I am not overcome. I am bound to no more, said he, having said I would but break one Lance, and since you fell you have no reason to urge me any more, but that this Knight do keep his promise. Let him be judg'd first overcome, said Don Brianel, and the rest shall quick-

ly be fulfilled. But the other Knight of the Lyons ſæing this, went to them, ſaying, there can be no right judgment given on this controverſie; for both you will ſay he is not vanquiſhed, though he be: but I will try with you, ſaid he to Don Brianel, which of them is vanquiſh'd, therefore pals no ſentence hereon, for our battel ſhall arbitrate it, and what we elſe would. Don Brianel perceiving that the Knight threatned him, made no anſwer, but rein'd his horſe about, couching his Lance to mæt his adverſary who was nothing ſlack to do the like; and like two furious Lyons encountring with mighty ſtrength, making the earth tremble under them. Don Brianel encountred the Knight of the Lyons in ſuch ſort, that penetrating the ſhield and armour, he made him bend his head back to his horſe crupper: but the Knight of the Lyons ſtrok him on the viſor of his Helm, which being of a fine temper, reſiſted there the fury of the Lance, which for all that brake his Lance, making it fly from his head, conſtraining him to ſave himſelf by holding about his horſes neck, almoſt beſides himſelf, thinking he had loſt his eyes. In this manner ſtood he a while till he had recover'd his ſenſes, then ſæing his adverſary come toward him with his ſword drawn, aſhamed of his accident, and mad with rage, did the like, covering his head with his ſhield for want of a Helm: but ere he could do ſo, he was ſuddenly known by the Knight of the Lyons, and he that juſted with him thinking he had done him ſome great harm, ſheath'd his ſword, and in Greek ſaid, Stay Prince of Macedon, for you muſt not combat with me. Which Don Brianel ſæing, did the like, ſaying, Who are you that knows me in a ſtrange Land? The Knight not replying, unlaced his Helm, and ſtraight Don Brianel did ſo too, demanding for his dear Brother Don Bellianis? He is very far from hence, replied Don Brianel. But what is that valiant Knight that comes with you? It's my Brother Don Clarineo of Spain, ſaid he, and I do greatly joy to have met with you, for elſe we knew not what to do. By this Don Clarineo was thither come, and with great love imbraced him, and ſaid, (to the great wonder of Damartino and Palineo, to ſee their good agræment) It had almoſt coſt us dear, to know of you againſt your will what we required; I aſſure you, if you longer conceal your ſelf I will no more ſeek you. We are in a

ſtrange

strange Land, replied Don Brianel, therefore can I do no otherwise, though it should cost me more danger. But what shall we do? for thinking to find you in necessity, the Emperor and we shipt our selves with 100000 men, which are not far from hence; for knowing you were come to restore the Princess Aurora to her Kingdom, we departed to aid you. Where left you my Lord the Emperor, demanded Don Brianel? He is not with us, I assure you, answer'd Lucidamore, for he and Sabian of Trebento were separated from us by a certain Adventure. All this talked they that Damartino and Palineo did not understand, though they thought they knew one another. Wherefore Don Brianel said to the Princes, It behoveth you to say, that the Soldan of Babylon hath sent his Army to place the Princess Aurora in her Kingdom, that these Knights may more willingly further us, for in these affairs they are very forward. Is my Brother here, demanded Don Clarineo, and my Cousin the Prince Arsileo? I left them in Persia, replied Don Brianel, in a bloody controversie against the Soldan, about the death of Don Gallaneo of Antioch. Is't possible, said Don Clarineo? I assure you, you have greatly gladded me with the death of the Traitor: but tell me, did my Brother Don Bellianis kill him? He did, replied Don Brianel, hereafter I will inform you of the manner how. Now advertise your Pages to say, ye all come away from Babylon. So they shall, said Don Clarineo. Whereupon Don Brianel called to him Palineo (that was much abashed at his fall) and said to him and Damartino, You are (Sir Knights) to give the immortal Gods great thanks for directing our affairs better than we wished, for these Knights are my near kinsmen, for whom I would undertake any danger in the World. I speak this, Sir Palineo, because you should not vex your self at your chance, nor diminish your good will toward me for what is past: besides all this, they are come about the same matter we have in hand, landing a strong Army, sent to this end, from the Soldan of Babylon, which will help us, being here hard by: wherefore consider what best we may do, for in this, nor any thing else, none of us will in no manner contradict you: whereunto Palineo somewhat comforted, made this answer, I could not receive greater comfort for my overthrow: being done by such a

Knight, and your nigh Ally, for which cause he deserveth to gain the honour of all Adventures in the world; therefore I remain no less bound to his service, though I believe he little needs it, than heretofore I was to yours. I do greatly thank you, Sir Knight, said Don Clarineo, thinking my self happy to meet you, and rejoyce we came not to handy blows, being sure to have been vanquished by you, as your courteous words sufficiently show: therefore I surrender all the honour of the victory to you, as your due, resting yours for ever, as my future deeds shall approve: so imbracing one another, expell'd all envious rancor from their valiant hearts: this done, Damartino said, he thought good they all return to the Castle, where they might conclude what should be performed; in the mean time one of the Pages should go and charge the Army to stay where they had left it, till they received farther order. This counsel being allow'd, they sent two of their Pages with command, and themselves return'd to the Castle, where resting that day, they resolved the Prince Don Lucidamore and Damartino should that night go to the Army, and before morning light should conduct close to the walls of Antioch, who they knew to be ready in Arms with above 100000 fighting men, because by their spies they were advertised of their power, and the usurping King accounting them enemies, determined to meet them in the field, yet commanding the City Gates to be fast shut, lest unawares it should be surprised, leaving within 40000 men to defend it: and he with the Count Gariano prepared to set forth. Moreover it was resolv'd, that Don Clarineo and Don Brianel with his friend Palineo should pass through the Mine to the City, and procure to open one of her Gates for their entrance, which was strongly fortified, that they feared nothing for two years. So Damartino and his companion went to the Army, greatly rejoycing to see the good order thereof. Don Lucidamore notwithstanding his Pages had deliver'd his message, did himself give command they should say they were sent by the great Soldan of Babylon.

CHAP. XLIX.

The great danger the Princes *Don Clarineo* and *Don Brianel* sustained in the City of *Antioch*, how they were succoured by the Knight of the Basilisks. The winning of the City, and the death of the Tyrant *Tramolcano*.

The

The appointed hour come, which made every one think it a year, so much they desir'd to be within Antioch, and having seen the signal of the approach of the Emperors Army, the valiant Knights Don Clarineo, Don Brianel, and the politick Palineo, opening the dor of the Mine, went through to the Palace, but they were scarce at the Palace side when they heard a great noise; and hearkning, they understood it was because the Army of strangers had so suddenly appear'd before the walls, whither the King Tramolcano with Count Gariano were going with an infinite company, to see if they would assault the City before morn, whereto lacked not two hours. All which indeed was so; for Don Lucidamore and Damartino having commanded their men to hang Scarfs upon their armour to be known from their enemies, did at that time conduct their men hard by the Gate, which should be opened for their entrance. Be quiet, said Palineo, and let me go forth to see what we were best to do. Do what you will, said Don Brianel, here we'l stay for you. And presently opening the dor softly he went forth. How like you this Knight, said Don Brianel? What should I say of him? (answer'd Clarineo) but that I never saw a braver Knight, I mean of more policy in all my life before. Thereupon Don Brianel recounted to him all he had done in his company, which greatly contented Don Clarineo, at which time he return'd, saying, Sir Knight, the Gyant is gone with all his company, let us now follow him, doing as the time shall minister occasion. They did so, thrusting themselves among those that were going to the walls, where arriving they saw the Gate fast shut which they had determin'd to open, and the Gyant had placed a Garrison there, and was going to speak with Count Gariano. I believe, said Palineo, we shall have more ado to open the Gate than we thought. I have (replied Don Clarineo) consider'd how to do it: my Cousin Brianel shall keep the passage from the Mine, letting no more pass hither; and you (Sir Palineo) shall by force take the keys from the Porter, and with them procure to open the Gate, and I will defend you from these that are already here: this must be with speed, that the valor of your couragious hearts, and the charge we have enterprised doth bind us to. Whereupon Don Brianel setled himself in the passage, which being narrow he could scarce

defend

defend himself. Palineo with great courage, by light of many Torches, stept to the Porter, and cleft his head at one blow, and took the keys from him, but ere he did it, many Knights assaulted him to give him his death. The valiant Prince Clarineo, knowing what he had to do, stept before, giving so mighty and mortal stroaks to every one that approached, that they fled from him as from the presence of death. By this time Palineo by his spædy diligence had opened the gate, had not the fearful Tramolcano (hearing the sudden accident there) with an infinite number of Knights returned with his heavy Mace, running with such fury, that if Clarineo had not stept behind his dead horses and Knights that lay there, he had been slain at that first encounter of the horse, but he wounded the Gyants horse in the head, thrusting his sword quite through, that the furious beast raising himself in such manner overthrew his Master; the treacherous Count Gariano would have done the same to Palineo, but stepping aside, he tumbled him from his horse at one blow. Certainly they could not have given two better blows than these, that might more help them: for when the Gyants Knights that were about 100, saw their Master down, alighted also, because the narrowness of the place might not be a cause to hurt them with their horses. The fearful Gyant being very heavy, with great pain raised himself, foaming at mouth, blaspheming all his gods, went against Clarineo, who being joyn'd with Don Brianel, were both in fierce skirmish, giving and receiving mighty stroaks, whose eccho resounded in the Camp without the City: and the Gyant seeing him there, rusht in, to hold him while his men did kill him; but having no advantage of strength over him, Clarineo to escape his hands, bravely pluckt him to him, that both fell down, where he was pitifully wounded, and had not his strong armor defended him he had lost his life: and getting from the Gyant he began a cruel fight, with great danger: whom Palineo seeing so sore wounded, wondred how he breath'd. Don Brianel was in no less peril, for so many laid hold on him, with haste to pass by, that he bled as fast as any of them: in danger were they all 3, loking for nothing but death, though the King and Traitor Gariano were wounded no less than they: for Clarineo meaning to leave his life reveng'd, so laid on them, that

all

all were imbrued in their own blood: and whosoever had seen them would rather have judged them so many raging Tygers, or hungry Lyons, than Knights, hoping of no succour of them without; for though they tryed to enter, could not approach the Gates, defended by the Gyants Garrison. While this thus passed, at such time as the giver of light illuminated the dark night, there came down a Valley not far from the City a mighty pillar of fire, and after it followed a Knight, with 2 of the ugliest Gyants that ever were seen, who with such furious speed (as thunder-bolts break through the air) approach'd to the wall, setting a ladder against it. The Knight that came with them, whose armour was garnish'd with Basilisks, alighted from his horse, and without let of any below, he mounted thereon to the top of the wall, bestowing such deadly strokes, that ere they were aware of him, he tumbled above fifty over dead. Don Lucidamore saw such gallant prowess in one Knight, leaving his armour to Damartino's charge, quickly climb'd the ladder, he was scarce on the top, when the Gyants taking it, return'd that way, and in the manner they did come, leaving the beholders amazed with wonder. The Knight of the Basilisks instructed what he should do, descended certain steps of stone that were in the wall, beating down on each side many Knights before him, clearing the way for Don Lucidamore that follow'd, making no less slaughter than he on the rebellious people: at length he arrived at the Gate where Don Brianel was, weary and tired, who seeing the Knight of the Basilisks, thinking him to be one of his enemies, strook him a mighty blow, but he knowing him, defended it with his shield, and rusht in where he was; there he espied Clarineo, that had before him above 30 Knights slain, and then with one stroak laid the Count Gariano dead on the earth, but was in extream danger, because he lookt to the trusty Palineo, who by losing much blood was in a trance, that he was fain to bear him close to the wall, where he kept him before himself, making stupendious deeds. And there arriving the Knight of the Basilisks, in the Grecian tongue he said, Courage, brave Knight, for you are already succour'd. At the end of these words, with one huge stroak he cut off the Gyants leg, that he fell down, and breath'd his last, beating away all the Knights about him, and quickly

freed

frædthat Gate, ſtepping both to the portal thereof, where Lucidamore and Don Brianel were. And the Troops without, ſæing they could not enter in, overthrew all that ſide, making a great breach in the wall, wherein ten Knights might eaſily paſs together, preſſing in with ſuch fury that they were extreamly oppreſt. Defend you this entry, ſaid Clarineo, to the Knight of the Baſilisks, while I open yonder Gate; and he did ſo bravely, that in deſpight of them that firſt arrived, he overthrew above 500 dead and wounded, making the reſt give place to his puiſſant ſtrokes. Clarineo went to Palineo for the keys, but he would not part with them, but open'd the Gate: when they ſaw it, with great clamours they approach'd to enter the City. The Knight of the Baſilisks and his companions ſæing it, withdrew themſelves to give that fury place, with their arrival the battel was renewed in ſuch manner that the place was heaped with dead men, becauſe King Tramolcano's multitudes were infinite and expert, knowing that if they loſt the City, they ſhould all pay the tribute of death to their enemies ſwords, fought like mad men. The Princes having recover'd their Knights, together with the Prince of the Baſilisks, and Clarineo having aſſured Palineo, whom he found with life, uniting themſelves, preſt in the thickeſt of the battel with ſuch courage as they augmented in themſelves, with deſire to ſæ their affairs terminate in a good end. The ſtreams of blood began to run about ſo faſt, like rivers deſcending from ſo many mountains. Damartino conſidering that the City would hardly be won by that means, by reaſon of many people within to defend it, commanded all his men to name aloud the Princeſs Aurora, ſo they did, ſaying, Antioch, Antioch, for Princeſs Aurora. At this cry and Name, the people of the Countrey hearing, and thinking their Lady & Princeſs was there whom they ſo greatly deſired, abandon'd thoſe belonging as well to the Traitor Count as the Gyant, and withdrew themſelves, which they had not done in the beginning, becauſe they dæm'd them enemies to the City & Land, themſelves crying within as others did without, trampling under their horſes and maſſacring without pity thoſe traitors in ſuch ſort, to revenge themſelves for the outrages done by them, that ere noon they left not one alive to bear news of their deſolation, having ſlain that morning

morning above 80000, wanting above 6000 Christians. And this hapned by Damartino's policy, which if it had not been, though their adversaries had also in the end all dyed by the sword, their losses had been infinite. This done, Don Lucidamore caused to be proclaimed, that on pain of death none should stir any thing in the City, but quietly lodge therein, without oppressing or molesting any way the meanest Citizen of the same. And having taken all the Fortresses, Castles & Holds of the City to their power, calling Don Clarineo and Don Brianel with him, went together to the Knight of the Basilisks, who being mounted would depart. But Don Clarineo remembring the danger he had freed him from, with great love imbraced him, saying, O most glorious and renowned Knight, the excellentest that ever drew a sword, I hope you will not so greatly wrong us, so to depart unknown, having liberated all of us from so great danger: for which, not only our lives, but the whole glory of this lasting victory of this battel is too little recompence for such aid; thinking our selves sufficiently honoured, by solely knowing what you are. This he spake in the Grecian language, for when he succour'd him first, he encouraged him in the same tongue. I know not excellent Prince (answer'd the Knight of the Basilisks) how I may cancel the bonds you tye me in by the incomparable merits of your words, yet notwithstanding unlace my helm. Don Lucidamore more amazed than at first, to know his Brother, did presently unlace his, whereby the excellency of his complection is seen: whom Don Clarineo knowing, rested so confused with content, that the tears ran down his cheeks, and with a loud voice said, O mighty Lord, that for us all did suffer, what great wonder do I see? having before these mine eyes my dear Lord and Brother, the Prince Don Bellianis. Whereupon he straight leapt from his horse to kiss his hand. The like did all the rest. Don Bellianis seeing them do so, dismounted his horse to imbrace all those Knights, with such content as may be imagined. Here wants nothing now (said Lucidamore) to end our demand, but the presence of our Lord the Emperor. That shall not need, replyed Don Bellianis, for I have left him well within the City of Bollera, and hard by Persepolis, whereto we must go with all speed. How arrived he there,

(demanded Don Clarineo) having loſt himſelf far from thence: That I know not (ſaid Don Bellianis) but I left him where I tell you, and there I believe we ſhall find him. Here they were ſeparated by the multitudes of Knights that came to do their duties to Don Bellianis, not able to expreſs their joy with his ſight. And he commanded them all to keep his and all their names ſecret, what they were he would have none of the City know. Having done with their greetings, they went to King Tramolcano's Palace and lodg'd there, their men being quarter'd in the City, they took the dead bodies away, offering no wrong or injury to any Citizen. They carried the noble Palineo to the Palace, who had recovered his ſenſes, all the Knights viſiting, and much honouring him: at whoſe preſence he greatly rejoyced, as alſo to ſee thoſe buſineſſes ended. Don Clarineo and Don Brianel were laid in two rich Beds, hard by Palineo's, where their many wounds were dreſſed by skilful Chirurgions. Don Bellianis taking in his company Damartino, whom he greatly eſteemed for the Princeſs Aurora's report of him, and went about the City, and aſſembling together all the States thereof, and the chiefeſt Citizens of the ſame, Don Bellianis made them a ſhort diſcourſe; thanking them for their loyalty they always obſerv'd, promiſing they ſhould all have their loſſes requited with full and ample ſatisfaction, and ſhewed them the Letter written to Damartino. They greatly conſolated by his ſpeech, promiſed to procure reſtitution of the whole Kingdom, upon which concluſion Don Bellianis return'd to the Palace, leaving Damartino giving order to recover the reſt of the Province without ſpilling of more blood. To which effect he ſent meſſengers to all Cities and places of importance in that Kingdom.

CHAP. L.

How the whole Kingdom of *Antioch* being recovered, the eſtate of Count *Gariano* was given to the politick *Palineo of the Venture*, and leaving *Damartino* Governour there, all thoſe Princes departed toward *Perſia*.

SO ſoon as it was known through all the Kingdom of Antioch, the total ruine and utter deſtruction of the Uſurping King and all his Forces, they all aroſe againſt the Tyrants Garriſons,

risons, knowing those Knights came from their lawful and right Princess, so that utterly subverting those adverse strengths, leaving none with life, they sent Ambassadors to Antioch, to acquaint them of these events, so happily brought to a period, which much rejoyced them, sending thither Governors to order those uproars, till all things else were happily concluded. By this time the wounded Knights were through well, except Palineo, who being worse wounded was longer in healing. But one day being all together in Council, it was determined that Dramartino (as before) should sway the government of the whole Kingdom, and did swear all the people to obey him. And though he refused it, alledging he was far in years, and therefore it better became him to withdraw into a private life, leaving the variable chances of the giddy world; yet in the end he was forced to it at the intreaties of the Nobility of the Land, that highly esteemed him. And Don Bellianis having understood of his Cousin Don Brianel the great toyl and dangers that the politick Palineo had in those businesses sustain'd, call'd him before all the greatest Peers, saying thus, If the merits that your valour and worthy person deserves should accordingly be recompenced, valiant and politick Warriour, all this Kingdom were insufficient to counterpoise your high deserts, being recovered by your only means; for it is manifest that you were the cause of the restitution thereof, as also Damartino's liberty; the glory of all which things deservedly should be attributed to your self. Which notwithstanding, I intreat you (not regarding the smalness of the gift, but the good will of the giver, and as token of your farther merits) to accept as your own the whole Estate and Lands belonging to the Count Garino, wishing it were in a better time, that I might express my love toward you with larger effects, according to the usance of my mind: yet will I procure the Princess Aurora to confirm you this, with promise of a greater recompence. All those Lords that were there present, highly allowed and commended what Don Bellianis had done, especially the Princes Don Brianel and Clirineo. To whom Palineo thus made answer, Excellent Prince and most heroick, for so may I with reason (though I know you not) call you, having on me extended the magnificence of

your

your royal mind, by the bounty of your liberal hand, which in no less a person than I speak of can be seen, having done nothing that might deserve so much as the company of such famous Knights; but the greatness of your largeness passing all compare, bindeth me to this: and so do I receive these favours, to imploy the same, together with my life in your service, and the Princess Aurora my sovereign Lady, beseeching the immortal Gods, that when I do forget this duty, that then I may be made an example of the like ingratitude to all the universal World.

And thereupon prostrating himself upon his knees, desired to kiss his hand: but Don Bellianis refusing it, imbraced him with great affection, the like did all the other Knights, calling him thereafter Count Gariano, having deserved it by the virtue and valour of his mind, possessing nothing of his Ancestors, but an Horse and Armour, and Weapons.

Don Bellianis having finished this action, commanded all his Army speedily to ship themselves, charging all their Leaders and Captains to bend their Voyage to Persia, and attend his coming, or order from him at Persepolis, making as if he had left the Emperor in danger there. They with a good wind departed, leaving Don Bellianis alone, with his onely Brothers, and Don Brianel that appointed to meet them by Land. After all this they continued eight days in Antioch, which being pacified and quieted, they resolved the ensuing day to depart.

The Count Gariano and the Governour Damartino greatly sorrowing for their absence; but before they went, they so much intreated them to discover themselves, that Don Bellianis not able to deny it, told them what they were, taking their words they should not disclose it to any; who rested amazed, yet very glad that these affairs were concluded by so great a Prince, and giving them Guides to direct their way to Persia, they at length departed. In which journey leaving them; here endeth the first part of the History, landing her tempest, beaten in the dark doubtful Surges of accepting hope, on the quiet shore of your most gentle and patronaging favours.

FINIS.